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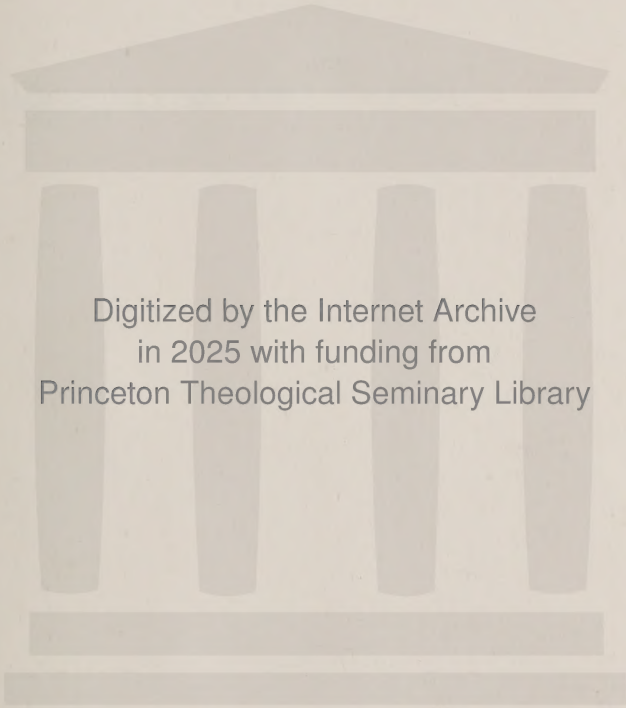
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PERSONALITIES AROUND Paul

Men and Women Who Helped or Hindered the Apostle Paul

BY HOLMES ROLSTON

JOHN KNOX PRESS
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

1954

OTHER BOOKS BY HOLMES ROLSTON

The Social Message of the Apostle Paul

Stewardship in the New Testament Church

Consider Paul

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3111-(20)-6563

DEDICATED
to the
Sunday Evening Congregation of the
West Avenue Presbyterian Church
Charlotte, North Carolina

PREFACE

Here is a new book. It is new not simply because it has just come from the press. It is new rather in its freshness, vigor, and vitality. There are some informing books that are heavy and dull. To read them is a bit like a trudge through a desert. But here is a book that while packed with information is as thrilling as a stroll through a garden.

In this book Dr. Rolston deals with personalities, both friends and foes, that had to do with that superb personality, St. Paul. He flashes fresh light into the faces of men and women with whom every Bible student is familiar. He also lights up for us other faces that were so vague they hardly seemed human.

It has long been my conviction that there is no more helpful type of preaching than the study of Bible characters. Of course this is not the case when the minister merely holds an autopsy over one long dead, or seeks to dissect said body in the presence of a congregation. Such a performance could only be interesting to a student of anatomy. But when the minister allows the character to speak for himself, as does this author, then his message is abidingly new because it comes out of life.

Personalities Around Paul should appeal to every student of the Bible. Ministers will find it especially helpful. The book is intensely Scriptural. It is scholarly. It is deeply devotional. Above all it has the gracious charm of simplicity. Then, too, it is as free from triteness as from muddy thinking. It is therefore a genuine pleasure to me to commend this book. It is worthy of an author for whose learning, hard work, and consecration I have a profound respect.

CLOVIS G. CHAPPELL

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express appreciation to Mr. John W. Hill of Black Mountain, North Carolina, and to Dr. Hunter B. Blakely, Mr. Cameron D. Deans, and Miss Bessie Conway Lewis of the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, for the reading of the manuscript of this book. Many of the suggestions made by them have been incorporated into the text of the book.

I wish to thank by daughter, Miss Julia Long Rolston, for typing the manuscript and Miss Mary Virginia Robinson for her work as editor.

HOLMES ROLSTON

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PROLOGUE

The personalities that gather around the figure of Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, constitute one of the most significant groups in human history. They are the men and women whom God used to lay the foundations of the Christian Church. There is today an amazing amount of interest in the origins of Christianity. If a popular novelist writes a book in which he seeks to re-create the life of the world in which the Gospel was first proclaimed he is certain to get a hearing. Many of our best sellers have owed part of their appeal to the desire of Christians today to understand better the faith of their fathers in the days when the Church was young. The producers of our sound movies are aware of this interest. But it is to the pages of the New Testament rather than to contemporary works of fiction that we must go for an understanding of the people who stood at the head of the stream of Christian thought and life.

While Paul is a dominating figure in the life of the early Church, he by no means stands alone. Paul was so deeply identified with the Christian movement that he touched in one way or another practically every significant figure in that arresting array of personalities which stood at the core of the Church of the New Testament. We know far more about the men around Paul than we do about the men who gathered around Jesus in the days of His flesh. In the beginning of his life as a Christian, Paul was profoundly influenced by such men as Stephen, Ananias of Damascus, and Barnabas. He spent two weeks at Jerusalem with Peter. He knew John, the beloved disciple, and received

from him the right hand of Christian fellowship. He worked with James, the brother of our Lord. In time, Paul gathered around him a fellowship of dynamic personalities who were associated with him in his great task of carrying the Gospel to the Gentile world. We think inevitably in this connection of Silas, the companion of his second missionary journey; of John Mark, the author of the second Gospel; of Luke the beloved physician, author of the third Gospel and of Acts; of Timothy, his son in the faith; of those trusted lieutenants, Titus and Tychicus; and of Apollos, the eloquent preacher who may be the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Women played an important part in the building of the Pauline world Church. Lois and Eunice were charter members of the church at Lystra. Eunice gave her son, Timothy, to Paul and to the work of the Lord. Lydia and a group of women associated with her were the firstfruits of Europe for Christ. Priscilla was the helper of Paul both in tentmaking and in preaching. She was used of the Lord to win Apollos to the faith. Paul commends to the Romans Phebe, the servant of the church which is at Cenchrea, as a woman who has helped him. The people who stood around Paul were men and women of clearly defined personalities but they were bound together in a unity through their common surrender to Jesus as Lord and Saviour. The same living Lord was at work through Peter, through Paul, and through those who worked with them to the building of the New Testament Church.

The personalities around Paul are not limited to those who stood with him in a common allegiance to Jesus as Lord. We meet also in the pages of the New Testament the men who opposed Paul. At first they stand out as arresting individuals, but when we study them closely we see that they fall into a pattern which illustrates the impact of the Gospel upon the world in the first century or in the twentieth. Gamaliel, the teacher of Paul, tries to remain neutral in a situation which demands decision and effective action. Ananias, the high priest, represents a religious hierarchy at its worst in conflict with the new spirit of the Gospel of Christ. At the preaching of Paul, Felix the cruel tyrant trembles with terror. The noble Festus has no place in his phi-

losophy for the story of a resurrection. The best he can do is to brand Paul as crazy. Herod Agrippa, the last of the Herods of the New Testament, finds himself strangely moved when he listens to Paul. Gallio, the Stoic and philosopher, misses his day of opportunity because he has no interest in religion. Elymas the sorcerer is a symbol of all those who practice the "black arts" and are inevitably forced into conflict with Christianity. Demetrius illustrates the reaction of a man who sees the evil sources of his wealth imperiled by the spread of the Gospel. And it is just possible that Paul gave his testimony before Nero, the last of the line of Julius Caesar and the worst of the emperors of Rome. Paul preached also to Drusilla, sister of Herod Agrippa and wife of Felix the governor. He was the bearer of the word of the Lord to Bernice, that other sister of Herod Agrippa who in her evil course was wife or mistress to three kings and two emperors.

Most of the men and women who stand out in opposition to Paul are known to us in secular history. We meet here in the pages of the New Testament people who are firmly rooted in the history of the first century. In discussing them, we are not dealing with characters created by a great dramatist or with the mythical figures of a dim past, but with men and women who actually lived and thought and worked and died. But if those who opposed Paul are real men and women it follows that those who stood with him are also actual figures of history. The arresting personalities which rise to meet us from the Book of Acts and from the Epistles of Paul were real people who played their part in those great events which accompanied the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the first century. They were men and women who lived in the years A. D. 30-70. But they are so representative of human nature in all ages that through them the preacher of today can understand better the personalities of his own congregation.

A study of the personalities around Paul is inevitably a revealing study of Paul himself. No man who has deeply influenced history stands alone. He must make his impact on others if he is to mold his age. A great man must have the capacity to gather around him others whom he charges with his spirit. A

leader reveals himself both by his friends and by his enemies. We know a lot about a man when we know those who are for him and those who are against him.

The Paul who meets us in the pages of the New Testament is an intensely human person with an amazing capacity for friendship. The man who pens the massive Epistle to the Romans can also write the graceful letter to Philemon. The man who was turning the world upside down has time to weave tents with Priscilla and Aquila; to watch with the tenderness of a woman at the bedside of his sick friend, Epaphroditus; and to claim a runaway slave as "my son . . . whom I have begotten in my bonds." We can be sure that if Barnabas or Silas, or Luke or Timothy had been asked to name their best friend they would each have named Paul.

Great friendships are not accidental or incidental. Many friends are possible only to great souls who in the pilgrimage of life are bound together by a common devotion to great causes. There is no finer fellowship on earth than the comradeship of those who are united by a deep loyalty to Jesus as Lord and Saviour. Those who move out into the great adventure of living in obedience to the will of Christ for them find that they are part of a creative fellowship which gives meaning and purpose to life. It would have been a wonderful experience to have companied with the great Apostle to the Gentiles as he preached the Gospel to his generation. It would have been thrilling to have stood with him for Christ and against the evils of the first century. But in a very real sense we can become today a part of this Christian fellowship as we make our decision for Christ and against the evils of our world.

The unique thing about those who stand with Paul is that they all point beyond themselves and beyond Paul to the living Lord who is the eternal contemporary of every age and every civilization. These men and women of the New Testament will not let us be neutral. We must be for their Christ or against Him. In the studies that follow, we will face those who stood with Paul and those who stood against him and his Christ. As we meet these characters we will see our world as it is revealed by the world of

the New Testament. But these characters will have their deepest meaning to us not as we look through them at the world around us but as we look through them into the inner recesses of our own souls. They will warn us of the fearful consequences of disobedience or call to us to take our place in the fellowship of those who acknowledge Jesus to be the Lord.

STEPHEN 1

". . . a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit."—Acts 6:5 (R.S.V.)

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 6:5—7:60

As Paul is making his defense before the Jerusalem mob, he tells the story of a vision which had come to him a few years after he became a Christian. He says: "And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance; and saw him [the Lord] saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: and when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him."[1] Who is this man, Stephen, whom Paul remembers so vividly in this crucial hour of his life?

Stephen was the first Christian martyr. He was the first of the followers of Jesus to give his life for his faith. He is first mentioned in Acts in the story of the appointment of the seven deacons to relieve the apostles of the duty of serving tables in the daily ministration to the widows. As the complaint had come from the Grecians, the deacons were chosen in the main from the Greek-speaking Jews. Stephen is named first in the list of the deacons. He is described as a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit.

Stephen came into prominence through his debates with other Greek-speaking Jews in the synagogues of the Libertines. Young Saul of Tarsus must have been among those who debated

with Stephen. We can be sure that he would not have given his consent to the stoning of Stephen if he had not felt that the views of Stephen were so dangerous to Judaism that the man who stood for them should be punished with death.

The charges which were brought against Stephen were doubtless twisted to suit the purposes of the accusers. But even in this form they indicate clearly the nature of the debates that must have taken place between Stephen and Saul. The universality of Christianity was implicit in the Christian faith from the beginning. But Stephen was probably the first man to grasp fully the far-reaching implications of the new faith. The witnesses accuse him of speaking blasphemous words "against this holy place." Stephen must have dared to say that the place of worship was unimportant. He may have affirmed that as God was a Person, the important thing in worship was our knowledge of the character of God and the attitudes of our human spirits in the presence of the Divine Spirit. He may even have repeated the words of Jesus: "The hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father."[2] To the Jews of the first century, such an attitude destroyed the whole conception of the Temple at Jerusalem as the place at which men ought to worship God. Stephen saw also that if men were saved by faith in Jesus Christ, they were not saved by obedience to the law of Moses. He may even have repeated the prophecies of Jesus in which the destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem was predicted. The understanding of Christianity which was first expressed in the preaching of Stephen struck at the heart of Judaism. It was probably the preaching of Stephen which caused young Saul of Tarsus to decide that Christianity was a heresy, which if it continued to spread would be fatal to Judaism. He did not actually join in the stoning of Stephen, but those who threw the stones laid down their clothes at his feet and he was consenting unto his death.

Stephen was the first Christian martyr. He gave his life for his faith. But the word martyr in Greek means a witness. Stephen was willing to die for his faith, and in his death he gave witness to his faith. There is a note of witness in the very fact that a man

believes something enough to die for it. Someone has made the cynical comment, "There are few things worth living for and none worth dying for." But the early Christians presented the ancient world with a fellowship of men and women who believed something so passionately that they were ready if necessary to die for their faith.

The story of Stephen illustrates also the truth that Jesus never promised to remove His followers from the whole experience of tribulation, suffering, and ultimately death. The servant was not above his Master. The Master suffered and those who followed Him were also called upon to be ready if necessary to seal their faith with their life. Jesus had told His followers that in the world they would have tribulation. He had added that they were to be of good courage because He had overcome the world. But His promise of help was not to take them out of the tribulations of the world but to give them strength to be spiritually victorious over all that life brought them. He promised them that they could deal with their tribulations in such a way that they would turn out unto them for a witness. It was in the hour of his death that Stephen gave his greatest witness to his faith.

Stephen bore witness to the new spirit of love which was at work in the world in the Christian Church. This spirit went back to Jesus. He had said to His disciples: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."[3] Jesus Himself had illustrated His teachings in His life. On the cross He had prayed for the pardon of those who were crucifying Him. In Stephen we see the spirit of Jesus reappearing in His followers. As Stephen was being crushed by the stones of the mob he prayed for those who were stoning him. In the hour of his death he faced his persecutors and prayed: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." In this prayer, a new spirit of love appeared in our world. It is not easy to refuse to meet evil with evil, to return hatred with love, and to pray for those who despitefully use us

and persecute us. When we have been hurt deeply, it is not easy for us to be without bitterness. The spirit of love which was expressed in the prayer of Stephen was a powerful force in the spread of Christianity. Love disarms the adversary. Love strikes at the roots of hatred and bitterness. The love which Stephen showed for his enemies is an expression of the greatest redemptive force in the world. The spirit of love which is characteristic of Christianity at its best was expressed in the last words of the first Christian martyr.

Stephen in the hour of his death bears witness to the reality of the unseen world of God. The love which Stephen had for his enemies does not prevent him from pointing out the true nature of their sin. He faces his hostile audience and says: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it."[4]

Stephen's stern indictment of his enemies sealed his fate, but in the moment between the end of his speech and the closing in of the mob, there was given to him a vision of the glory of God. For a moment the veil which lies between man and the spirit world was drawn aside and Stephen looked up into heaven and cried out: "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."[5] Stephen saw that beyond the crisis of death there was the reality of the world of God where the risen Jesus was seated in glory at the right hand of God. This vision robbed death of its terror. The vision which the first martyr actually saw became the inspiration of countless others who in the days to come were to be called upon to give their life for their faith. The Christians could not be conquered because they were rooted in the unseen world of the spirit. They were confident that beyond death there was the glory of God of their belief in the reality of the world of God which lies beyond with their risen Lord seated at the right hand of God. Because

this present world, the early Christians were able to face death unafraid.

The death of Stephen illustrates the truth that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. Saul of Tarsus had debated with Stephen in the synagogue of the Libertines. The impact of the mind of Stephen on the thinking of Saul did not bear fruit all at once, but it must have been always present with Saul. It was now Saul's privilege to see the way in which a Christian could die. It was probably his sense of guilt in connection with the death of Stephen which made him at times think of himself as the chief of sinners.[6] The witness of Stephen did not immediately bear fruit in the life of Saul. For a time he hardened his heart and plunged into his effort by persecution to stamp out the infant church. But who can doubt that Stephen's words and the vision of the face of the dying Stephen were forever branded on the memory of Saul of Tarsus? In the period between the death of Stephen and his own conversion to the Christian faith, Paul must have thought often of Stephen. He had not been able to answer the arguments of Stephen. If Stephen could have been silenced in debate it would not have been necessary to put him to death. Could it be that Stephen was right and that Paul was wrong? Could it be that the real fulfillment of Judaism was to be found in the life, and death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth? The deep peace which was at the heart of Stephen must have troubled the unhappy persecutor. And when Paul became a Christian we can be sure that he felt called to take up and carry on the work of the man whom he had destroyed. The great Apostle to the Gentiles was dedicated to continuing the unfinished work of Stephen, the first Christian martyr.

ANANIAS 2

"Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews."—Acts 22:12
"And Ananias went his way."—Acts 9:17

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 9:1-21; 22:12-16

Ananias was probably the leading figure in the small Christian community at Damascus. It is possible that Ananias went to Damascus from Jerusalem as a part of the dispersion of Christians which came about as a result of the persecution which followed the death of Stephen. We know that reports of the persecution at Jerusalem reached the Christians at Damascus. The church at Damascus knew that in Saul of Tarsus a man had arisen who was seeking through persecution to stamp out Christianity at Jerusalem. Ananias had received reports of Christians who had been beaten in the effort to make them deny their faith. He knew of others who were serving prison terms. It is possible that some of his closest friends had suffered death at the hands of Saul of Tarsus.

If the news of the persecution of the saints at Jerusalem was being carried to Damascus, it was balanced by the report which was carried to Jerusalem of the growth of the church at Damascus. Saul, the persecutor of the church, knew that he would gain little through the destruction of the Christianity in Judea if in the meantime centers of the Christian faith were growing up in the surrounding cities. He set out therefore for Damascus with a band of soldiers furnished by the chief priests and with letters which gave him authority to arrest the Christians at Damascus and bring them bound to Jerusalem for trial. Saul could be reasonably confident of the outcome of these trials if they were held in Jerusalem.

The Christian community in Damascus had received warning of the expedition which was sent against them. Ananias as the leader of this community must have known fully the danger that he was in. He knew that Saul had set out from Jerusalem with a band of soldiers. He did not know that Jesus had confronted Paul on the road to Damascus. He was waiting for the persecutor to strike. He did not know when or where the blow would fall.

It was in this mood of uncertainty that Ananias went to bed on the third night after the persecutor should have reached Damascus. On this night, he dreamed a strange dream. He saw in his dream a vision of the Lord. (It is probable that Ananias had known Jesus in the flesh and that he recognized in his dream the One whom he describes as the Lord, even Jesus.) The Lord said unto him, "Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth."[1] When we remember that Ananias was expecting Saul of Tarsus as the persecutor who had come to arrest him and take him bound to Jerusalem, we are not surprised when in his dream Ananias replies: "Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name."[2] Still in his dream, Ananias hears the Lord reply, "Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."[3]

Ananias awoke from his dream. He might have dismissed the matter as a strange dream. But instead he was filled with the overpowering sense that he had received a word of the Lord which he must obey. We can see him dressing and lighting a lantern and going out into the night to find the street called Straight, to inquire for the home of a man named Judas, and to ask if in this home there was one called Saul of Tarsus. We can imagine that he received from Judas a reply something like this: "Yes, there is such a man here. He is blind. Three days ago a man led him here and engaged the room. Since then he has not left the room. There is water in the room, but if he has had food or drink I do not know it. Go up to him, for this man needs help."

Ananias went up. The way for his coming had been prepared by a vision which Saul had seen in which in answer to his prayers a man named Ananias had come to him that he might receive again his sight. As we analyze this meeting between Ananias and Saul there are six things which can be said about it.

The first result of the coming of Ananias was that Saul received again his vision. In the glory of the scene on the Damascus road he had seen the vision of the risen Lord. Blinded by the glory of this light, he did not see again until he looked into the loving face of Ananias. At the beginning of Paul's life as a Christian there was the knowledge that the Lord through his faithful servant Ananias had restored to him the vision which for a time he had lost.

In the second place, the scene between Ananias and Saul is an illustration of the power of prayer. The Lord says to Ananias: "Arise, and go . . . and enquire . . . for one called Saul, of Tarsus: *for, behold, he prayeth.*" In a room in the house of Judas on the street called Straight in Damascus there was a man who was praying. He was praying for the restoration of his vision. He was praying for the answer to the promise, "Arise, and go into the city, and *it shall be told thee what thou must do.*" And the prayer of this blinded man reaches to the throne of God and moves the hand that moves the world. As Saul prays he falls asleep, and as he sleeps he dreams. He sees in his dream a man named Ananias coming to him that he might receive his sight. He awakes from his dream and when the knock comes to his door, he knows that his prayer has been answered. In answer to the prayer of Saul, God has sent Ananias to him, and God has prepared the way for the coming of Ananias.

In the third place, we see in this story the co-operation between the human and the divine in the conversion of Saul. The conversion of Saul was supernatural. The Living Christ met him and conquered him on the road to Damascus. The surrender of Saul took place there. It was there that he came to the certainty that Jesus of Nazareth was alive and glorified. It was there that he expressed the surrender of his will in the cry, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" But while the conversion of Saul

was supernatural it was not conversion in a vacuum. The way for it was prepared by the preaching of Stephen. The testimony of Stephen in his death was branded forever on the mind of Saul of Tarsus. The way was probably prepared by the testimony of other Christians who had revealed their capacity to suffer and die for their faith. And God needed Ananias as His messenger to Saul. If Ananias had dismissed his dream as something of no importance and had resisted the conviction that he ought to go to Saul that night, Ananias would have missed the greatest opportunity of his life. If Ananias had failed, we can be sure that in some other way the risen Lord would have found the way to Saul. But Ananias did not fail. The most important night in his life was that night when he went out to seek for the man called Saul, of Tarsus, in the home of Judas, on the street called Straight.

In the fourth place, Ananias led Saul into the Christian community at Damascus. Saul was a Christian before Ananias came to him, but he was alone and blind in a strange city. And the Christians in that city would normally have been slow to receive him. Three years later when Saul returned to Jerusalem, the fear of him still rested on the Jerusalem church. But when Ananias came to Saul in Damascus, the first word of Ananias was to call Saul his brother in Christ. From then on the loneliness of Saul was overcome. He knew that he was part of the Christian community in Damascus. In conversion, a man is led to the place of surrender to Jesus Christ. But conversion is never complete until a man is led into the vital fellowship of the Christian community.

In the fifth place, Ananias administered to Saul the sacrament of baptism. He said to Saul: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."[4] As Saul prayed in his blindness he saw the enormity of his sin. He had thought that he was doing God service. Actually he was persecuting the church of God. And the enormity of this sin weighed upon him until at times he thought of himself as the chief of sinners. The word of the Lord through Ananias to Saul was the word of the forgiveness of his sins, the

word that his sins could no longer come between him and his Lord, the word that his sins would not block his reception into the fellowship of the church. Baptism was the symbol of the cleansing of the Holy Spirit which follows the repentance and confession of those who call on the name of the Lord. It was the symbol also of his complete break with the past and his identification with the Christian community.

In the sixth place, Ananias gave to Saul a new understanding of the purpose of God for his life. He said to Saul: "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard."[5] Saul the persecutor of the church had come to the end of his road. But the end of this road was the beginning of the way of the Apostle to the Gentiles.

BARNABAS 3

"And Joseph, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is, being interpreted, Son of consolation)."—Acts 4:36 (A.S.V. margin)

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 4:36-37; 9:26-27; 11:19-30; 14:25—15:5; 15:35-41

His real name was Joseph. He came from the island of Cyprus. He was of the tribe of Levi. This is all we know about the background of the man who is known to us as Barnabas. He must have been identified with the early Christian community at Jerusalem from the very beginning. The name which he bore in this community is suggestive of the man. It was after they had observed this man as he moved in his quiet way among the members of that first Christian church, that the apostles gave to him the name, Barnabas. Luke interprets the name as meaning, "The Son of Encouragement." A teacher of an adult Bible class once said of a member of his class that that person was his *encourager*. The word describes exactly this man Barnabas. He was an *encourager*. All of the key incidents which come to us out of his life fit into this pattern.

The first recorded incident in the life of Barnabas reveals his part in that sacrificial giving through which the first Christian church met the needs of its poor. As he moved within the life of the church, Barnabas saw the need of some of the people who were members of the Christian fellowship. He did not have the extra money which made it possible for him to make a large gift. He did own a piece of land. He decided therefore that as his contribution to the sharing of wealth in the early Christian community at Jerusalem, he would sell this land and turn the money from it over to the apostles as part of a common fund from which aid was given to those who were in need. We

are not told that Barnabas sold all his property. We do know that his gift made a profound impression on the church at Jerusalem. The tragic story of Ananias and Sapphira is in itself a comment on the impression produced in the Jerusalem church by the gift of Barnabas. And this gift of Barnabas may have been closely related to his great spiritual power. When Barnabas received Jesus as Lord of his life, he made Him also Lord of his possessions. It was Jesus who said to His disciples: "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much . . . If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?"[1] Barnabas began by being faithful in the stewardship of possessions, and his fidelity here proved that he could be trusted with the true riches.

The next scene which we have from the life of Barnabas is in connection with the return of Saul of Tarsus to Jerusalem. The conversion of Saul had been followed by a period of activity in Damascus which was brought to a close by an attempt on his life by the Jews of Damascus supported by Aretas, the king of Arabia. Saul fled from Damascus, being let down in a basket from the wall of the city, and came to Jerusalem. When we remember Saul's activity as the leader of the persecution of the Christians at Jerusalem, it is easy to understand that the Christians at Jerusalem were afraid of him. But Barnabas went to Saul, heard his story, believed in him, introduced him to the apostles, and stood for him in the Jerusalem church. Here again we see Barnabas in his position as an *encourager*. The probability is that Saul did not remain in Jerusalem for more than two weeks. But this visit marked the beginning of that friendship between Barnabas and Saul which was to become one of the great friendships of history.

A period of at least five years passes in which we hear nothing of Barnabas. During this period God through the hand of Peter opened the doors of the church to Cornelius and his Italian friends at Caesarea. In principle, at least, the right of the Gentiles to enter the church was established in the approval by the apostles and brethren at Jerusalem of the action of Peter

at Caesarea. But we do not hear of any mass movement of the Gentiles into the church at Caesarea. It was at Antioch in Syria that unknown disciples from Cyprus and Cyrene began preaching the Gospel to Greeks. There grew up at Antioch the first truly interracial fellowship within the Christian community. This movement at Antioch was sufficiently revolutionary for the apostles at Jerusalem to decide to send a trusted messenger to investigate it. The unquestioned confidence of the apostles in Barnabas is revealed in his selection for this difficult mission. Barnabas did not seek to crush the new movement in the name and in the authority of the apostles. Instead he watched the movement at Antioch until he was confident in his own mind that the church here was moving under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. And instead of crushing the movement of the church at Antioch into the Gentile world, Barnabas identified himself with it and became its leader. Here again Barnabas was true to the characteristic attitude of his life. He was always helping and encouraging.

After Barnabas had worked in the church at Antioch for a time, he saw that the tremendous possibilities involved in this expansion of Christianity from a movement within Judaism into a universal religion demanded a leader of great capacities. He doubtless remembered from his conversations with Saul the story of the way in which Saul at the time of his conversion had been appointed to bear the message of Christianity to the Gentiles. He felt that the time was now ripe in the church for Saul to assume leadership in this work and that Antioch was the place for him to start. With these thoughts in his mind, Barnabas went to Tarsus for to seek Saul.

For the next six years, Barnabas and Saul were associated together in one of the most creative friendships of history. They worked together in the building of the church at Antioch. They were sent together to bear the gifts of the Christians at Antioch for the relief of the brethren in Judea. It was here that John Mark joined them. When Barnabas and Saul were sent out from the church at Antioch on the first missionary journey, they took Mark with them as their attendant. Mark disappointed them

by leaving them at Pamphylia to return to Jerusalem. But Barnabas and Saul pushed on into the interior. During this first missionary journey, the leadership of the party definitely shifted from Barnabas to his younger companion. It was on this journey also that the name Saul was changed to Paul. They went out as Barnabas and Saul. They returned as Paul and Barnabas. There is no indication of any jealousy here on the part of Barnabas. He was thrusting his friend into a position of leadership which only Paul could fill. These two men were bound together by the experiences of the first missionary journey. When they returned to Antioch, they stood together for the right of the Gentiles to be received into the church without being forced to submit to circumcision or being required to observe the details of the Mosiac law. The question was basic. The Gentiles were willing to become Christians. They were not willing to become Christians if they had also to become Jews. Paul and Barnabas carried their fight to the church at Jerusalem. They won from the apostles and elders at Jerusalem a decision which left the door of the church open to the Gentiles.

The friendship of Barnabas was one of the enriching experiences of Paul's life. The apostles separated over the question of taking John Mark with them on the second missionary journey. When we look back on this scene we know that Barnabas was right. Paul refers to Mark three times in his Epistles.[2] In each of these references, he speaks a word of praise for Mark. The references of the Epistles show also that while Paul and Barnabas separated in their missionary activities, they remained intimate friends.[3] The decision to separate from Paul in order to stand behind his nephew Mark must have been a very costly decision on the part of Barnabas, but in it Barnabas was true to his fundamental character of an *encourager.*

The power of Barnabas to breathe courage into others was born of his faith in God. When he looked at a man like Mark he knew what that man could become when his life was yielded to God and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Because he believed in God he believed in men until he led men to believe in themselves and to have the courage to attempt great things for God.

In his great task of inspiring men with new courage, Barnabas was following his Master who came to bind up the brokenhearted, to comfort those who mourn, to give courage to those who faint and are scattered abroad as sheep without a shepherd. It is easy to hurt, to bruise, to crush, to knock, but it is a Christlike thing to move among men as one who has the power to fill men with new courage until broken and discouraged men receive again the capacity to speak out boldly in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. There are many aspects of his life in which Barnabas is a challenge to us, but he calls to us most of all to imitate him even as he imitated his Master in his ability to bring new courage to the defeated and the discouraged.

GAMALIEL 4

". . . a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people."—Acts 5:34

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 5:34-40; 22:3

When Paul was given the opportunity to speak in his own defense to the Jerusalem mob, he began by crying out in the Hebrew tongue, "I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day."[1] Paul knew that the mention of the name of Gamaliel would have a quieting effect on the Jerusalem mob. He was confident that the mob would hear him when they knew that he was a pupil of Gamaliel.

The Gamaliel whom Paul mentions here is known to us in secular history. He was a distinguished rabbi who was contemporary with Jesus. He is usually called Gamaliel "the Elder" to distinguish him from his grandson Gamaliel, of Jabneh. He himself was a grandson of the famous Hillel. The Talmudists are loud in his praise. They say that "since Gamaliel the Elder is dead, there is no glory of the law left."[2]

Gamaliel is known to us also through sacred history. He is described by Luke as a member of the Sanhedrin, a Pharisee, and "a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people."[3] Gamaliel made a speech at a critical moment when the apostles were on trial before the Sanhedrin. Alarmed by the rapid growth of Christianity in the days immediately following Pentecost, the high priest and the Sadducees arrested the apostles and forbade them to teach or preach in the name of Jesus. It was in

defiance of this command of the chief priests that Peter as the spokesman for the apostles uttered the noble words, "We ought to obey God rather than men."[4] These words have been repeated many times as Christians have faced the tyranny of Church or State. But Peter's speech infuriated the members of the Sanhedrin. Cut to the heart, the chief priests took counsel to slay the apostles.

This was a critical moment in the history of Christianity. It is difficult to see how the Christian movement could have survived the loss in the beginning of the men whom Jesus had trained to carry on His work. The man who saved the apostles was Gamaliel. His speech is a masterly piece of argument. He starts with a word of warning as he says, "Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men." He mentions two revolutionary movements in the recent history of the Jews that had failed. The Judas of Galilee who is referred to here is mentioned in Josephus.[5] Gamaliel concludes with the statement: "Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."[6] The counsel of Gamaliel prevailed. The apostles were beaten and commanded not to speak in the name of Jesus. But they were released.

The Christian world must always be profoundly grateful to Gamaliel for his part in saving the lives of the apostles. There is much to be said for the policy of toleration which he advocates here. The various faiths of the world have learned to live together in peace as men have learned to respect each other's convictions and to grant to every man the right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, but there is a profound difference between the refusal to persecute in the name of religion and the adoption of a neutral attitude in the presence of a Word of God which demands decision and commitment. Gamaliel is neither for Christianity nor against it. He will not persecute it but he will not embrace it.

In his attitude toward Christianity, Gamaliel stands in sharp contrast to his brilliant pupil, Saul of Tarsus. Undoubtedly, Saul

reverenced his great teacher. He was proud to be able to say that although born in Tarsus of Cilicia he was brought up in Jerusalem at the feet of Gamaliel. He says that by Gamaliel he was taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers. But the probability is that even in student days, pupil and teacher were not in complete agreement. The Jews of Paul's time were divided then, as they are today, into liberal and conservative groups. The issue between them was the extent to which the Jews could adapt themselves to the Greek culture in which they lived. Paul describes himself as a Hebrew of the Hebrews.[7] He calls himself a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee.[8] He says to Herod Agrippa, "After the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee."[9] Both Paul and Gamaliel were Pharisees, but Gamaliel followed his grandfather Hillel and was known for his tolerance and moderation. Paul was far more intense in his zeal for Judaism. In contemporary terms, Paul would have been a leader of the orthodox Jews. Gamaliel would probably have belonged to Reform Judaism.

The two men reacted very differently when they faced Christianity. Gamaliel stood for a policy of toleration toward Christianity. But as soon as Saul of Tarsus learned in the debates with Stephen the inner meaning of Christianity, he decided that this movement must be crushed. He saw that Christianity struck at the heart of Jewish nationalism. He was not willing to offer the privileges of the Jews to the Gentiles and to merge Jew and Gentile in the larger unity of the Christian Church. In opposition to the advice of Gamaliel, Saul of Tarsus became the persecutor of the Christian Church. He gave his consent to the death of Stephen. He led the first organized attempt to blot out Christianity by persecution. He even sought to crush the Christian group which he heard was growing in distant Damascus. In all of this he was fulfilling Gamaliel's words. He was fighting against God. The risen Christ says to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"[10]

None of us will defend the attitude of Saul in these days. But there is a sense in which Paul's reaction to the Gospel is to be respected. The proper opposite of faith is offense. When

those who refuse to accept the Gospel react violently to it, the very vehemence of their opposition shows at least that they have understood its challenge. The dividing line is not between those who admire Jesus and those who despise Him. The only dividing line known to faith is that which runs between those who accept Him and those who reject Him. It is possible that Jesus would prefer our hatred to our neutrality. This much at least is clear. When Jesus needed a man to become the Apostle to the Gentiles, He chose Saul the persecutor, and not Gamaliel the tolerant Pharisee.

On the road to Damascus, the risen Christ confronted Saul of Tarsus. Saul came out of this experience with the conviction that Jesus of Nazareth was alive and glorified. The persecutor became the Apostle to the Gentiles. He who had sought to crush the church proclaimed the faith he had persecuted.

When Saul became a Christian, he and Gamaliel continued to be divided in their attitude toward Christianity. In the beginning both men had faced Christianity from the background of Judaism. Gamaliel had advised tolerance. Paul had stood for persecution. The change in Paul meant that the two men were divided on a different level. Paul the Christian was convinced that Christianity was the true development of Judaism. To Gamaliel, and to all those who continued in Judaism, the way in which Paul worshiped God was branded as heresy.

The final division between Paul and Gamaliel needs to be seen clearly because it is essentially the division between Paul and Reform Judaism today. Paul accepted the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. With insights born of his faith in the risen Lord, he saw in Christianity the fulfillment of all the things which were written in the law and the prophets. His prayer for his own people was that they might be led to accept Jesus as the Messiah. He sought to bring Gentile and Jew together by bringing them both into the larger stream of Christian life.

The attitude of Paul was anathema to Gamaliel. Gamaliel was the greatest rabbi of his time. He was a teacher of the law. He shared the hope of Israel for the coming of the Messiah. He may have known Jesus in the days of His flesh. He heard the preaching

of Peter. He could have examined the evidence for the miracles by which God was confirming the preaching of the apostles. He felt in his heart that God was at work in this movement. He opposed persecution and stood for tolerance. But he avoided any personal commitment. He saved the lives of the apostles but he never accepted their message. He understood neither the power of Christianity nor its offense.

ELYMAS 5

"Elymas the sorcerer . . . withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith."—Acts 13:8

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 13:6-12

The story of the conflict of Paul and Barnabas with Elymas, the sorcerer, is the first recorded incident of the first missionary tour. The missionaries sailed from Seleucia, the port of Antioch, to Cyprus. This island was the home of Barnabas. Christianity in germ at least had been established in Cyprus for a number of years. Unknown Christians fleeing the persecution that arose after the death of Stephen went to Cyprus. As Saul of Tarsus was the moving force behind this persecution, he unwittingly played a part in the early evangelization of Cyprus. Christian evangelists from Cyprus went to Antioch. These unknown preachers were the first to preach the Gospel on equal terms to both Jews and Greeks. They built in Antioch a church in which both Jews and Greeks were united in a vital Christian fellowship. Paul and Barnabas passed through Cyprus on their way to Perga and the Asiatic mainland. But they preached as they went. They began in Salamis. They crossed the island and carried on a brief preaching mission in Paphos, the capital of the island.

While they were preaching at Paphos, Sergius Paulus, the governor of the island, sent for them and asked to hear from them the word of God. This action on the part of the governor was most unusual. Christianity in the beginning moved in the main among the lower classes of the social order. Paul a little later could write to the Corinthians that not many mighty or noble had been called.[1] We do not know why the proconsul took the initiative in sending for Paul. He may have had some previous

contact with Christianity. He may have been moved by a deep dissatisfaction with the philosophy and mythology of the Greeks and Romans.

Closely associated with the governor was a man whom Luke describes as "a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet, named Bar-Jesus."[2] Luke tells us also that he was known as Elymas. The root meaning of the word is *wise*. It was doubtless an assumed title just as Simon of Samaria was known as Simon the Great. This man was a Jew who had turned to sorcery. In so doing Elymas had denied his Jewish heritage, as the Jews were strictly forbidden to have anything to do with the "black arts." We have in our own time magicians who entertain audiences with sleight-of-hand tricks. Many of them are men of unquestioned integrity who practice their profession without any pretense of being able to do anything that is supernatural. But others use their skill in magic to exploit the superstitions of the people.

Sorcery in the ancient world moved on a low moral plane. These men were akin to the spiritualist of today who for a price will seek to arrange a séance with the departed. Sorcery at its best was based on fraud and pretense. At its worst it may have represented a league between human beings and the powers of evil. The magician used his tricks to persuade people that he had supernatural wisdom and power. In this way Elymas had established a powerful influence over the governor. The magician was an evil man who exploited to the full the hold which he had on Sergius Paulus. It may have been in an effort to escape from this evil influence which he felt was destroying him that the proconsul took the radical step of sending for Paul.

Elymas has a counterpart in the witch doctor or medicine man of primitive peoples today. Often the witch doctor is the most powerful man in an African tribe. The people look to him to produce a "medicine" which will protect them from the power of evil spirits. For a price, he will aid a man by putting a "curse" on his enemy. Sorcery appeals in a perverted form to the capacity for religious feeling which should be satisfied in the true religion. The evil influence of men like Elymas among primitive people today cannot be overestimated.

When Paul was ushered into the presence of Sergius Paulus, Elymas, the sorcerer, stood with the governor. In this setting Paul told the story of Jesus of Nazareth. He probably began with a statement of the Messianic hope of the Jewish people. He must have told of the mighty works of Jesus which He performed as signs to the men of His generation. The narrative would lead naturally to the rejection of Jesus by His own people, to His death on the cross, and to the witness to the resurrection as the starting point of Christian preaching and teaching. We can be sure that Paul told also the story of the time that the risen Lord met him on the road to Damascus. His message would inevitably end in the call to repentance and faith.

As Paul preached, Elymas observed with growing concern the effect of this message on the governor. He knew full well that if Sergius Paulus believed the witness of Paul it would mean the end of the almost hypnotic influence which he had been able to establish over the governor. He knew that the conversion of the proconsul to Christianity would be the end of his day of power. Because his own security was at stake he dared to withstand the apostles, seeking to turn away the proconsul from the faith. Dr. Donald G. Miller in his story of the Apostle Paul makes Elymas say to the governor, "This Jesus about whom he speaks was a criminal crucified by Pontius Pilate. Worship an ass, O Sergius, rather than listen to this worthless palaver!"[3]

Sorcery is bad at any time. It appears in its most evil form when it seeks to prevent a man or a people from turning from its evil power to the surrender of life to Jesus Christ as Lord. Paul is an apostle of Christ. Elymas is the instrument of the powers of evil. Sergius Paulus is in the place of decision. The salvation of his soul is at stake. It is in this setting that Paul being filled with the Holy Spirit pronounces a curse on Elymas. He says: "You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind and unable to see the sun for a time."[4] The Lord was present in that scene, unseen but not unreal. He honored the word of His apostle. At that moment Elymas

was stricken with blindness. As he sought to leave the room he had to ask someone to lead him by the hand.

This is cursing but it is not profanity. It is the curse of an apostle of Christ pronounced on a man who by sorcery had established an evil hold on a man who was groping for the light. There is a cursing which is not profanity, but this kind of cursing is terribly serious business. It is best to leave it to apostles. The power to bless that which is good may also involve the power to call down a judgment on that which is evil. Certainly for most of us it is best to leave judgments to God and not to invoke the power to curse. While we would refrain from presuming to curse in the name of the Lord, we can declare to evil men that we live in a moral universe and that God as the vindicator of the moral order is eternally opposed to men like Elymas and to all others who are workers of iniquity.

The sudden judgment of God which fell on Elymas broke the evil hold which the sorcerer had on Sergius Paulus.[5] His influence had been established by magic. Perhaps it required a peculiar revelation of the power of the Lord to set the soul of Sergius Paulus free from the tyranny of this evil man and to prepare the way for his acceptance of the word of the Lord. Probably Sergius Paulus was the first Roman governor to be converted to the Christian faith.

The words of Paul suggest that the blindness that fell on Elymas was temporary. After all, he was a human being with an immortal soul. Happy is that man who when he receives a sudden and terrible judgment of God permits it to humble him, to break him, and to lead him to turn from his evil ways to a new faith in the Christ who is ready to extend His offer of love and forgiveness to all who will receive Him. Saul, the hardened persecutor of the Christian Church, was stricken for a time with blindness. It was while he was blind that he made the full surrender of his soul to God in Christ. The temporary blindness which fell on Elymas may have meant the turning of his soul from darkness to light.

We can only guess at the effect of this judgment of God on the others who may have witnessed it. But we can hope that

the sign to Sergius Paulus was also a sign to them and that through it they passed from unbelief to faith, from rebellion against God to glad surrender to His purpose for them. Luke has recorded this story in order that the sign to the governor and his friends may also be a sign to us. It is a sign that should help to break the power of evil over us and lead us to the place of surrender, of faith, and of new obedience.

JOHN MARK 6

"Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry."—II Timothy 4:11

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 12:12, 25; 13:4-5, 13; 15:36-40; Philemon 24; Mark 14:51-52; Colossians 4:10; I Peter 5:13; II Timothy 4:11

In the account of the arrest of Jesus, there is an interesting incident which is told us by Mark. As Jesus was being led from the garden of Gethsemane, there followed Him a young man clothed with a linen garment. We do not know who this man was, but evidently he had left his bed hastily on hearing of the arrest of Jesus and had taken time only to throw around himself a linen garment. When the disciples fled, this man continued to follow Jesus. He followed so closely that the soldiers sought to seize him. In the struggle which followed, he escaped from them but left the linen garment in their hands and fled naked. Fortunately for him it was night. The fact that the story is found only in Mark's Gospel has led many people to believe that this young man was none other than Mark himself. If this surmise is correct, this is the first mention that we have of Mark in the New Testament.[1]

When Peter has been delivered from prison, the home in Jerusalem to which he goes is described as "the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark."[2] Peter, when he finds himself a free man, goes at once to the home of Mark. This reveals the close relation between Peter and Mark. Peter at the close of his First Epistle calls Mark "my son."[3] Paul refers to Mark as "sister's son to Barnabas."[4] We would naturally assume that when Barnabas was in Jerusalem, he was in close association with his nephew, John Mark.

The first meeting of Mark with Paul was when Paul and Barnabas made the trip from Antioch to Jerusalem bringing with them the gifts of the Christians in Antioch. As they returned to Antioch, Mark accompanied them, and when they went forth on the first missionary journey, they took Mark with them as their attendant. Mark was with them in the trip from Antioch to Cyprus. He shared with them the thrilling experiences on this island and made with them the journey by sea to Perga in Pamphylia. At this point Luke writes, "and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem."[5] The reasons for his departure are not given here, but later at the beginning of the second missionary journey when Barnabas wishes again to take Mark with them we are told that "Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work."[6] It is clear from this reference that Mark quit and went home. He deserted the missionaries just as they were ready to make the hard journey by land into the interior. The details of the story must be left to the imagination, but the broad outlines of it are clear. Mark was not willing to make the sacrifices involved in the missionary activity of Paul and Barnabas. He put his hand to the plow, but he looked back and proved that at this time he was not fit for the Kingdom of God. He started but he did not finish. Paul and Barnabas went on without an attendant.

The next time that Mark saw Paul and Barnabas was when they told at the Jerusalem Council of the experiences of their first missionary journey. As Mark listened, he was filled with shame. He might have shared in this pioneer work which had laid the foundation of the Gentile church. Instead he had been taking it easy in his mother's home in Jerusalem. We can only surmise the conversation which must have gone on at Jerusalem between Barnabas and Mark. But we know that when Paul and Barnabas set their faces again toward Antioch, Mark was with them.

The time of decision came when Paul suggested to Barnabas that they go again and visit their brethren in the cities in which they had preached. Mark wanted to go along and Barnabas

wanted to take him. Paul refused. He had no use for a quitter. Mark had deserted him when he needed help. Paul was through with him. But Barnabas stubbornly insisted that Mark must be given a second chance. Luke tells us that the contention between Paul and Barnabas over Mark was so sharp "that they departed asunder one from the other."[7] We cannot justify the way in which the apostles quarreled. But sometimes those who are not apostles find a certain amount of human interest in realizing that even the greatest of the apostles disagreed in their plans for carrying on the Lord's work. Barnabas felt that he could not fail Mark. He took his nephew and sailed for Cyprus. Paul took Silas for his companion and went through Syria and Cilicia to Derbe. It was there that Paul found Timothy and took him along to take the place of Mark. As we look at this story in retrospect we know that Paul was wrong and that Barnabas saved Mark for a great ministry. But we can also see a providential ordering of the lives of these men. Paul, Silas, and Timothy made a great team for the evangelization of Greece.

At this point Mark drops out of the record of Acts. We are indebted to the references to him in the letters of Paul for our assurance that he finally made good. These references also show that the separation between Paul and Barnabas over Mark was temporary and that when Mark had proved himself Paul was the first to receive him back into his confidence. The first of these references is Colossians 4:10-11. This letter was written from Rome about ten years after the separation of Paul and Barnabas over Mark. Paul writes that he has sent word to the Colossians concerning Mark. The Colossians have been told that if Mark visits them they are to receive him. Mark is listed along with two others as those of the circumcision who are with Paul in Rome. Of them Paul says: "And they have been a comfort to me."[8] We are interested in knowing that Paul could describe Mark as one who had been a comfort to him. Mark is also mentioned in the letter to Philemon.[9] Here Paul lists Mark, Aristarcus, Demas, and Luke as his "fellowlabourers." Both in Colossians and in Philemon, Mark is mentioned as being with Paul in Rome at the same time that Luke was there. This contact of the two men is

interesting in the light of their common interest in writing the story of the words and deeds of Jesus.

The last reference to Mark in the letters of Paul is in II Timothy 4:11. Paul writes to Timothy, "Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry." To get the full force of this comment on Mark we must remember that in II Timothy Paul is a condemned man whose friends have fled from him lest they share in his fate. But even in this situation Paul wants Mark brought to him because he knows now that Mark is completely trustworthy and that Mark is one man he can use at a time when all others are deserting him. And this is the man whom Paul had refused to take with him on the second missionary journey because of the fear that he would quit when the going got hard.

There is something that appeals to all of us in the story of Mark. Every man faces moments of failure. And every man seeks to overcome his failures and to re-establish himself in the confidence of his friends. What was it that transformed Mark the quitter into Mark the trusted lieutenant of the great apostle? First of all, it must have been something that happened in the soul of Mark. It involved a renewed dedication of himself to Jesus Christ. Among the human agents in the restoring of Mark, too high a place cannot be given to Barnabas. The "Son of Consolation" risked his friendship with Paul to save Mark. It was the faith that Barnabas had in him that nerved Mark to the struggle. The rebuke of Paul may have played its part under God in bringing Mark to the admission of his failure and to the high resolve to do better. When Mark returned to Jerusalem after his desertion of Paul and Barnabas he found Peter there. Peter knew what it was to fail and to be restored, and Peter may have been used of God to help Mark get back on the right road. Regardless of the way in which we explain his renewal, Mark will always stand before us as an example of a failure who made good.

We should not close our study of Mark without an expression of gratitude to him for his Gospel. Papias says that Mark "became Saint Peter's 'interpreter,' and as such composed his

Gospel from what he remembered of the Apostle's teaching."[10] Mark gives us therefore in his Gospel a written document which goes back to the preaching of Peter. When we remember Mark's close association with Barnabas, Paul, and Peter, we know that he was well qualified to write about Jesus. His Gospel is an invaluable portion of the written record which is at the same time both the source and the norm of the preaching of the Church. In this Mark takes his place with Luke as one of those associated with Paul who preserved for us the written record which tells the story of the Son of God in the days of His flesh.

SILAS 7

". . . our faithful brother, as I account him."—I Peter 5:12 (A.S.V.)

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 15:21-41; 16:19-40; 17:4-15; 18:5; I Thessalonians 1:1; II Thessalonians 1:1

Silas first appears in the narrative of Acts in connection with the sending of the letter from the apostles and elders at Jerusalem to the churches in Syria and Cilicia. The letter was a most important document as it contained the approval by the Council at Jerusalem of the right of the Gentiles to be admitted to the church without submitting to circumcision. It guaranteed freedom from Jewish ceremonialism and affirmed by implication the great Pauline doctrine of salvation by faith alone. Evidently the apostles thought that it was not sufficient to send the letter back to Antioch by the hand of Barnabas and Paul. They felt that this letter should be accompanied by two men, known as leaders in the Jerusalem church, who could confirm by word of mouth the decision embodied in the letter. For this purpose they chose Judas, who was surnamed Barsabas, and Silas. Luke describes them as "chief men among the brethren."[1] The choice of Silas for this difficult mission marks him at once as an outstanding man in the Jerusalem church.

Judas and Silas made the trip with Paul and Barnabas from Jerusalem to Antioch. Luke tells us that when they came to Antioch, "Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them."[2] This means that Silas was recognized as a prophet in the New Testament church. He stood in the goodly fellowship of the prophets. The essential characteristic of the prophet is not the capacity for prediction but moral and spiritual insight into the

meaning of divine truth for human life. The true prophet is the bearer of the word of God to his generation. Silas stood in the presence of the Word which had been spoken by One who was a prophet and more than a prophet. He had seen the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. He knew that the Eternal Word had become flesh and dwelt among us. He was one of those who had beheld the glory of the Son of God. He knew that Christ's glory was the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. It is important that we should acknowledge Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of the living God. But we do not fully understand the significance of the revelation that has come through Jesus until we see its relevance to all areas of human life. Silas was a passionate preacher of the Word who interpreted the meaning of the glad tidings of what God had done in Christ to the men of his generation.

After Silas had completed his mission at Antioch, he was free to return to Jerusalem. But Silas made the decision to stay in Antioch and identify himself with the work there. In this he followed the example of Barnabas a few years before. This was a major decision with Silas. It represented his committal of his life to the missionary program of the Church. It represented his identification of himself with the principle of a non-segregated church in which the Gentiles without circumcision were received on terms of complete equality with the Jews.

The next important development in the life of Silas came when Paul invited him to be his companion on the second missionary journey. The way for this had been prepared by the separation of Paul and Barnabas over the question of John Mark. The choice of Silas reflects the high opinion which Paul had of Silas. It was a peculiarly happy choice, as the issue which had been debated at Antioch and Jerusalem was still crucial in the churches of Syria and Cilicia. Silas as the chosen representative of the church in Jerusalem in this matter was in a peculiar position to confirm in these churches also the letter which had been sent to the church at Antioch.

Silas was an actor second only to Paul in the stirring events of the second missionary journey. He went with Paul through

Cilicia to Tarsus and on to the cities of the first missionary journey. At Lystra, young Timothy joined them and became their attendant. We see here the beginning of that great missionary team of Paul, Silas, and Timothy. Luke joined them at Troas and accompanied them to Philippi. Silas was Paul's most important assistant in the carrying of the Gospel to Europe. He shared Paul's imprisonment at Philippi and joined with him in the hymns of praise sung at midnight in the prison. Paul's language to the officials at Philippi would seem to suggest that Silas also was a Roman citizen. Silas and Timothy accompanied Paul to Thessalonica. The three of them labored here until they had laid the foundation of this important church. Silas joined Paul in a flight by night from Thessalonica. The three men worked together at Berea. Because of the disturbances raised by the Jews at Berea, it became necessary to send Paul away alone. He went by himself to Athens, and sent back word for Silas and Timothy to join him at once. But the three were not united until Paul had ministered for some time in Corinth. After the coming of Silas and Timothy to Corinth, Paul was encouraged and testified boldly to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.

Silas and Timothy remained with Paul during his ministry at Corinth. The letters to the Thessalonians were written from Corinth. They are written from Paul, Silas, and Timothy. (The name of Silas is given in the Epistles as Silvanus, but there is no question as to the identification of the two men.) Silas drops out of the narrative in Acts and the Epistles of Paul with the ministry in Corinth. When Peter closes his First Epistle he says, "By Silvanus, our faithful brother, as I account him, I have written unto you briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God."[3] In our last picture of Silas, we see him starting out with the priceless document which is known to us as the First Epistle of Peter, to carry this letter to the churches of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. And we have Peter's word that he has considered Silas a faithful brother, a man he could trust with this great mission.

This word of Peter's gives us part of the message of Silas to us. He was a great man in the New Testament church. He was

not so great a man as Peter or Paul or perhaps Barnabas. But Silas was a man who could be depended on. We cannot all be great men, but we can all be faithful men.

Perhaps the name Silas is best known to many people because of its appearance in one of the verses of the hymn, "The Old-Time Religion."

> " 'Tis the old-time religion. . . .
> It was good for Paul and Silas,
> And it's good enough for me."

The argument of the hymn is sound. The faith that created and sustained men such as Paul and Silas is the faith that can be the creating and sustaining power in the lives of great men today. But before we claim the religion of Silas as our own we must be sure we have the brand of religion that Silas had. This hymn is often used in an appeal for a return to the emotionalism that used to be in the old-time evangelistic services. There was probably plenty of this in the preaching of Silas. If you will read the fourteenth chapter of I Corinthians and try to picture for yourself the meetings of the church in Corinth you will find that the gift of prophecy and the gift of tongues were both in evidence. We need to remember that Silas helped build this church.

There is room for plenty of emotion in the religion of Silas. But it was never an emotion that had no relation to dedication of life. Silas was not a reactionary in the religion of his day. He identified himself aggressively with the missionary wing of the church. He stood for a non-segregated church in the midst of the class divisions of the ancient world. When Paul and Silas came to Thessalonica, it was said of them, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also."[4] Silas in his own time was identified with a revolutionary faith which was turning upside down all the accepted values of the ancient world. He was a crusading representative of this faith who was pushing on from city to city to plant cells of Christian believers in all the cities of the Roman Empire. He was willing to suffer any hardship and if necessary to risk his life to be loyal to his Lord. He was a chosen messenger—first of the apostles at Jerusalem, and

then of Paul, and later of Peter. The apostles knew that they could depend on him not to fail them. Their final word concerning him was that he was counted a faithful brother.

When we claim to have the old-time religion that was good enough for Silas, let us be sure that we have the dedication of life that Silas had and that we are willing to work through the revolutionary aspects of the Christian faith in the same way that Silas did. When we understand the religion of Silas we can hope that the faith which created and sustained him will call into being in our own time men who will follow in the footsteps of Silas.

LUKE 8

"Luke, the beloved physician."—Colossians 4:14

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Colossians 4:10-14; II Timothy 4:11; Philemon 24

Luke is mentioned by name only three times in the New Testament. All of these references are found in the Pauline Epistles. The most revealing is the one in Colossians in which Paul writes: "Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you."[1] In verses 10 and 11 of the same chapter Paul mentions three men, Aristarchus, Mark, and Jesus, who is called Justus. He comments, "These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers. . . ."[2] It is reasonable to conclude that the others whom he mentions such as Luke and Demas were Gentile converts. This fits in with what we know about Luke from other sources. Luke was not one of the children of Israel. He is probably the only Gentile among the writers of the New Testament.

Luke is mentioned along with Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Epaphras as sending greetings to Philemon. The similarity of this group of names is a strong argument for the letter to Philemon having been written at the same time as the letter to the Colossians. In II Timothy, Paul writes: "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world . . . Only Luke is with me."[3] When Paul writes these words, he is a condemned prisoner. It is dangerous for men to be associated with him because he is known as the leader of a persecuted and hated sect. Others have forsaken him, but Luke remains by his side. When they are seen in this setting, the words, "Only Luke is with me," endear Luke to us as the friend who was faithful to Paul even to the time of his death.

Further information concerning Luke is given us by the "we"

passages of Acts. The narrative of Acts is in the main in the third person. But there are a number of passages in which the narrative is told in the first person plural. In this incidental way, Luke reveals to us those portions of his narrative in which he himself was present with Paul. These passages show that Luke joined Paul at Troas and was with Paul and Silas while they were at Philippi. Luke seems to have been left at Philippi.[4] He joined Paul again at Troas as Paul was on his last trip to Jerusalem.[5] He accompanied Paul on this fateful journey. Luke was with Paul during the whole of his two years of imprisonment at Caesarea. He has revealed himself through his writings as a born historian, one of the greatest of our writers of history. He had two years in Palestine within a few years after the death of Christ. It was his ambition to get a clear understanding of the events connected with the life and death of Christ and of the history of the Christian Church from the beginning. He intended to make it possible for all men to know the certainty of these events which were of such crucial importance to all mankind. We can be sure that Luke spent these two years gathering the materials for his Gospel and his Book of Acts. We can be confident that Luke and Paul discussed the information he had obtained as they made together the slow journey by boat to Rome. And we can depend on the accuracy of the story that Luke has told.

Luke was known as the beloved physician.[6] It is fair to assume from this that he was trained in the medical science of his day. Studies have been made of the medical vocabulary of Luke. These studies show that he used medical terms in a way that confirms the position that he was trained in medicine. He combined the attitude of a physician of his time with a knowledge of the healing ministry of Jesus and the apostles. It is interesting from this point of view to notice the way in which Luke changes a passage which he quotes from Mark. In describing the woman with an issue of blood, Mark writes: "And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse."[7] When Luke came on this passage he must have felt that it was not quite fair to the doctors. He softens it to read: "Having an issue of blood twelve

years . . . had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any."[8]

The fact that Luke was beloved as a physician shows that as he moved within the life of the early Church he used his skill as a doctor to minister to human need. He probably combined in a fine way a healing ministry which used the skill of medicine and at the same time worked in faith and dependence on God. On the cornerstone of the old Presbyterian Hospital building at Charlotte, North Carolina, we find the words, "Dedicated to the glory of God for the scientific healing of the sick in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.—Rev. D. H. Rolston, D.D." These words of the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church at the time that this cornerstone was laid can be taken as descriptive of the way in which Luke dedicated his medical skill to a ministry to men in the name of Jesus Christ.

The Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts are attributed to Luke. This does not rest on anything that we find in the New Testament. It is obvious that the two books stand together and the consistent tradition of the Church is that Luke is their author. A man reveals himself through his writings. The man who wrote the Gospel of Luke and the Acts was a poet, a master of prose, and a great historian. When Luke touches secular history he is accurate. Scholars say that the introduction to Theophilus which opens the Gospel of Luke is written in classical Greek that would be worthy of Thucydides. But when Luke moves out into his narrative he writes in the Greek that was spoken by the common people of his time. Luke's Gospel has been called the most beautiful book in the world. He is a lover of beauty. He is a master of the telling of a story. He writes with insights that are born of his knowledge of the Christian faith.

Behind the writing of Luke there was a great purpose. He tells us that when he decided to write his Gospel there were others who had sought "to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word."[9] Luke built on the work that had been done by others. We do not know all the sources that he

had, but we can be reasonably certain of some of them. He probably had a copy of the Gospel of Mark in a form not essentially different from that in which we have it now. He had a collection of the sayings of Jesus which probably goes back to the Apostle Matthew. He had a document that scholars call "Q" which may be defined roughly as material common to Matthew and Luke which is not in Mark. He had from an independent source some narratives of the birth and boyhood of Jesus. With this material and with other sources which we cannot accurately define, Luke wrote his Gospel. He wrote to his friend Theophilus in order that Theophilus might know the certainty of the things in which he had already been instructed. He wrote to Theophilus, but he wrote through Theophilus to the world. When his Gospel was finished Luke sought to trace the spread of Christianity from its small beginnings at Jerusalem until it became established in the centers of the ancient world as a universal faith, addressing its message to all mankind. He gave us the Book of Acts, which is the indispensable link between the Gospels and the Christianity of the Pauline Epistles and the early Church Fathers.

It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of what Luke and Paul have done for the Christian world through their writings. Together they have written more than half of the New Testament. Luke has given us his Gospel and his story of the spread of Christianity. Paul has given us in his letters the theology of the Christian movement. We have also the life of the early Church as it is reflected in his letters. Christianity would have been greatly impoverished if the rest of the New Testament had not been written. But Christianity could have lived if all that had been preserved from the first century had been the writings of Luke and Paul. The work of these two men in the committing of the Christian tradition to writing has put the Christian world forever in their debt.

When Luke wrote, Christian preaching was going on entirely independently of Luke and Paul. The Apostle John, for example, was still carrying on an active ministry. But there came a time when the written Word became the norm of Christian preaching. The preaching which went on in the church was judged by its

agreement to the witness to the preaching of the apostles which was to be found in the written Word.

After the first generation of Christians had fallen asleep, the written Word became also the source of Christian preaching. Men went to the written Word and waited for the Spirit to speak to them through the written Word before they ventured upon the task of Christian proclamation. Throughout the history of the Christian Church the written Word has been both the source and the norm of Christian preaching. Through their writings Luke and Paul spoke to their generation. Through them they will continue to speak to every generation of Christians until the Lord to whom they bore witness returns in glory and in power.

EUNICE 9

". . . thy mother Eunice."—II Timothy 1:5

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
II Timothy 1:5; 3:15; Acts 16:1-3; Philippians 2:19-23

Eunice was a Jewess. She was born within the family of Israel. But her faith in the religious heritage of Israel was not merely a matter of the accident of birth. She embraced the central truths of her Jewish faith as part of the deepest convictions of her own life. This heritage of faith came to her in part through her mother, Lois. Mother and daughter shared in the simple and genuine piety which marked Jewish life in the ancient world.

Eunice was married to a man who was a Greek. This created that deep inner conflict of faith which has marked so many homes. The division of the home in the area of religious faith became more clearly marked when Eunice gave birth to a son whom she named Timothy. Deeply rooted as she was in the Jewish faith, she was not permitted to have her son circumcised. Young Timothy grew to manhood without having received in his flesh the seal of the covenant made with Abraham and his seed after him.

As life went on, Eunice knew that if the faith which was hers and the faith which was her mother's was to become the faith of her son, it would have to be through her efforts and not through any help in the spiritual training of her son which would come from Timothy's father. Her home was the home of a devout woman who realized that she would have to bear without help from her husband the responsibility for the nourishing of the spiritual life of her son. The home of Eunice was in this respect not different from many modern homes. This division of religious conviction is often found when a marriage bridges the great reli-

gious divisions of Protestant, Catholic, Jew. It is found much more often when a woman of genuine faith finds herself married to a man to whom religion means little or nothing. It is a heavy task that is laid on a woman when she has to bear alone, or almost alone, the responsibility for passing on the spiritual heritage of her life to her children. It is a responsibility which no man who faces in the full his responsibilities as a father has a right to leave to his wife alone.

It is not always true that the woman in the home bears the spiritual responsibility for the passing on of the Christian heritage. Sometimes a man who is deeply concerned for the faith of his children finds himself married to a woman who is completely without interest in genuine religion. She moves in a little round of worldly interests and is never willing to make the sacrifices which are necessary if her children are to take their rightful place in the Sunday school, the church, or the religious activities of young people's groups. Tragic as it is when the woman has to bear the burden alone, it is even more tragic when this is the load which a man must bear alone. Women are in a peculiar way the preservers of the spiritual heritage of the race. They come into close and intimate contact with their children. It is difficult for a man to overcome the effect of the example of his wife on his children.

The only ideal situation is where man and woman unite to work together in bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. In such a home, the children are not forced to choose between father and mother. They grow up naturally in the faith which furnishes the spiritual atmosphere of the home.

The problem which Eunice had in trying to raise Timothy in her faith was created by the nature of her marriage. It was complicated by the conditions in the town in which she lived. Lystra was far from the centers of Jewish life. The probability is that there was no synagogue there. Paul did not begin his work here in the synagogue. This was his unvarying custom in the early years of missionary endeavor when the synagogues were still open to him. Where there was no synagogue we can be sure that

there were few Jews. Lystra was hardly a place of culture. The people there spoke a dialect which neither Paul nor Barnabas understood. They were ready in their reaction to a miracle of healing to worship Paul and Barnabas as Mercury and Jupiter. A little later their superstition turned to cruelty. It was at Lystra that Paul was stoned and left for dead.[1] Eunice had to bring up young Timothy in this kind of community.

She knew the spiritual possibilities of her son. She knew that he could learn and learn quickly. And just because she knew his possibilities she felt all the more that she could not fail to lead him to a vital faith. When we see the problem of Eunice, we can see also the way in which she solved her problem. She solved it first of all not so much by what she said or by what she did as by what she was. Paul in writing to Timothy pays a tribute to the faith of his mother. He speaks of the *unfeigned* faith which dwelt first in his grandmother, Lois, and then in his mother, Eunice. He is persuaded that the same faith is to be found in Timothy. Young Timothy as he grew up in the home in Lystra saw that in his mother and in his grandmother religious faith was genuine. How different Timothy's reaction would have been if he had felt that in his mother religion was a matter of pretense and front to the world. The children of the home never fail to penetrate the sham of the lives of their parents. We cannot permanently deceive those with whom we live in the intimacy of the life of the home. A college pastor who has seen many generations of students come to the campus of a university says that the thing which does most to determine the attitude of the students to religion when they get to college is the genuineness of the religious life of the homes from which they come. If the religion of the home has been a pretense, the boy will throw it overboard as soon as he is free to run his own life. But if he has seen in his father and his mother a vital and burning faith which has given purpose and meaning to their lives, he is certain to want for himself the faith which he has seen in them.

But Eunice did not content herself with the witness of her life. Paul in writing to Timothy reminds him that from a child he has known the Holy Scriptures which were able to make him

wise unto salvation. He tells Timothy to continue in the things he has learned and to remember of whom he has learned them.[2] As Paul speaks of the knowledge which Timothy has had from a child, the reference of the verses must be primarily to Eunice and to Lois. These two women determined that young Timothy should know the sacred writings of his people. When he was a little child as yet unable to read they told him the stories of Abraham, of Jacob, of Joseph, of Moses, of Samuel, and of David. They taught him to sing the Psalms of his people. When he was older they read with him the great passages from the prophets. They set against the evil of Timothy's environment the knowledge of the Word of God which was able to make him wise unto salvation.

Eunice was successful in her effort to lead her son to a vital faith. When Paul and Barnabas came to Lystra proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Lois, Eunice, and Timothy believed the message. They had waited for the coming of the Messiah. When they heard that He had come they accepted Him as Lord and Saviour. They passed easily and naturally from the faith of Judaism to the fuller faith of Christianity. And when Paul returned to Lystra on his second missionary journey, the Christians both of Lystra and Iconium gave him a good report of the place which young Timothy had made for himself in the Christian community. Paul observed Timothy at work in these churches and knew that he had found the young man whom he needed as companion and attendant to him and to Silas. He said to Eunice, "Eunice, I need your son." It must have been a very great sacrifice for Eunice to part with her son and to see him go forth from her into all the dangers which marked the missionary journeys of Paul. But Eunice did not falter. She had given her son to the Lord and she gave him gladly to the missionary task of the Church in her generation.

Eunice did not lose her son. It is true that he was gone from her most of the time. But she followed with pride his development in Christian leadership. She had the deep satisfaction of knowing that her son had found a vital faith which gave to his life a sense of meaning and purpose. She felt that through the

gift of her son she was entering sacrificially into the great redemptive purpose which dominated the life of Paul. She rejoiced that her Lord had seen fit to call her son to be His messenger to the Gentiles. She prayed daily for Timothy and for Paul. She felt that her prayers were answered when reports of Timothy's usefulness in the ministry came to her. Eunice made her greatest service to her Lord through her son. And wherever Eunice went in the Christian communities, people pointed to her and said quietly, "There goes the mother of Timothy."

TIMOTHY 10

"Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith."—I Timothy 1:2
"O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust."—I Timothy 6:20

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 16:1-3; I Corinthians 4:17; Philippians 2:19-23; I Timothy 6:20-21

In the story, *Good-bye, Mr. Chips,* as Chips lies dying, someone says, "Pity he never had any children."[1] It is then that Chips sees the vision of the long line of boys who had come to him in his school and gone out into life with their attitudes molded by him. Something of this feeling must have been present with the Apostle Paul when he wrote to the Corinthians, "For though ye have ten thousand instructers in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel."[2] But while there was a great multitude that stood out to Paul as his spiritual children in the Lord, there was one man whom Paul considered in a peculiar way his son in the faith. This man was Timothy, the son of Eunice. In the brief number of references which we have to Timothy, the idea of his spiritual sonship to Paul comes out at least five times. Paul calls him "my own son in the faith," "my dearly beloved son," "son Timothy," and "Timotheus, who is my beloved son."[3] In Philippians, he writes, "Ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel."[4]

Paul found Timothy on his first visit to Lystra. Timothy was the son of a Jewess, Eunice. His father was a Greek. His mother brought him up with an intimate knowledge of the holy writings of her people. It is clear from Paul's claim that Timothy was his son in the faith that Paul led him to Christ during his first missionary journey. When he returned to Lystra he found Timothy "well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Icon-

ium."[5] Paul and Silas took Timothy with them as an attendant and messenger very much in the same way that Paul and Barnabas had taken Mark with them in the beginning of the first missionary journey.

The record of Timothy as an attendant and messenger of Paul is interesting. Paul and Silas took Timothy with them when they left Lystra on their second missionary journey. Timothy was a member of the team which first carried the Gospel to Europe. Timothy must have been with them during their unusual experiences in Philippi. He worked with them in their ministry in Thessalonica. He fled with them to Berea. Paul was forced to leave Berea in such haste that he left both Timothy and Silas there. When he reached Athens he sent word for them to join him at once. It seems, however, that when Timothy reached Paul, the Apostle had heard of the threat of persecution in the church at Thessalonica. He sent Timothy back to comfort and strengthen the Christians in Thessalonica.[6] This was probably the first of the many missions of Timothy. Silas and Timothy joined Paul in Corinth some time after Paul's arrival there. Strengthened by the presence of these faithful companions Paul pressed the work in Corinth with renewed zeal. Silas and Timothy join with Paul in both of the letters to the Thessalonians. These letters were probably written while Paul was at Corinth. When Paul leaves Ephesus on the first trip to Jerusalem he sends Timothy ahead of him into Macedonia.[7] Paul joins him in Macedonia and then sends him on ahead again to Troas.[8] The probability is that Timothy accompanied Paul on the final trip to Jerusalem, but of this we cannot be certain. We do know that Timothy was with Paul when he wrote his letter from Rome to the Philippians. Paul is planning a little later to send him on a visit to Philippi as a man whom he can trust to care for the spiritual welfare of the Philippians.[9] Timothy is with Paul at Rome when the letter to the Colossians is written. He joins also in the salutation to Philemon.[10] Paul writes two letters to Timothy. The first of these is probably written after Paul's first imprisonment. Paul writes as a free man to Timothy who has been in Ephesus. The letter is filled with tender instructions from the aged missionary

to his son in the faith. II Timothy is written while Paul is again a prisoner. He is urging Timothy to come to him at once. The letter reveals Paul's love for Timothy and his concern that Timothy shall remain true to the faith. In the letter to the Hebrews, the writer says, "Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you."[11] This letter was probably written after the death of Paul. It tells us that Timothy has been in prison and has been set free. This is the last reference of the New Testament to Timothy.

More important than the study of Timothy as the attendant and messenger of Paul is the study of the character of Timothy as it is revealed in Acts and in the letters of Paul. Without attempting to be exhaustive we can sketch some of his outstanding characteristics. Timothy sought to realize in his own life the goal for character which was set first in Jesus Christ. Paul writes to the Corinthians, "Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ."[12] He writes earlier in the same letter, "I beseech you therefore, be ye imitators of me."[13] He writes that he is sending Timothy unto them and then says that Timothy is one "who shall put you in remembrance of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church."[14] Timothy lived with Paul as Paul sought to imitate the example of Jesus Christ. Timothy saw the Christian life as it was set forth in the life of Paul. It was his great purpose to live up to this ideal himself and to teach other Christians how to realize the divine standard of character in the midst of their own life situations. Most men come to their understanding of what it means to be a Christian by observing the life of a true follower of Jesus.

Timothy was a pastor who could be trusted to do the work of the Lord. Paul writes of him to the Corinthians, "Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do."[15] It is a great tribute to a man when we can say that he can be counted upon to do the Lord's work wherever he is. Paul could say of Timothy in his letter to the Philippians, "I have no man likeminded, who will care truly for your state. For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ."[16]

The picture of Timothy which is given here leads to another mark of his character. When Timothy was sent to a church he could be trusted to do the Lord's work. And in the heart of Timothy there was a genuine concern for the spiritual welfare of the people to whom he ministered. Timothy had a love of people and a sincere interest in the spiritual development of a people. Timothy knew how to comfort people. Paul sent him to the church in Thessalonica when this church was in trouble because he knew that Timothy knew how to help these Christians see the place of tribulation in the purpose of God for them.[17] Timothy had the pastor's heart, and it is not surprising that the letters which Paul wrote to him are called the Pastoral Epistles.

In the last place, Paul committed unto Timothy the keeping of the deposit of faith. This idea comes out frequently in Paul's letters to Timothy. When Paul wrote these letters he was an old man, he knew that he was coming to the end of his ministry. He stood in the first generation of Christians. To him and to his contemporaries there had been revealed the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It was his sacred task to preserve the Gospel in its purity and to proclaim it in its power. He knew that this Gospel was God's answer to man's need. He was not ashamed of the Gospel because he knew that it was the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believed. But when Paul knew that the time for his departure was coming, he became increasingly concerned about the fate of the Gospel in the world. It is in this sense that he writes to Timothy, "O Timothy, guard that which is committed unto thee."[18] The Greek is "guard the deposit." He writes in II Timothy, "The good deposit which was committed unto thee guard through the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us."[19] He continues, "The things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."[20]

Paul wrote to Timothy before the New Testament canon had been fixed. He committed to Timothy's keeping the faith he had received. It was Timothy's task to preach this faith in all its power. The best defense of the Gospel is its proclamation. But it was also Timothy's task to preserve the original purity of the

Gospel in the midst of all the attempts of men to add to it or to pervert its meaning. And it was Timothy's task to see that the message he had received was passed on through him to faithful men who would in turn teach others. We carry on in the spirit of Timothy when we continue to preach this Gospel in its purity and its power.

JOHN 11

"John . . . gave to me . . . the right hand of fellowship."—Galatians 2:9 (R.S.V.)

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Galatians 1:15—2:10

As we think of most of the men who were associated with Paul in the proclamation of the Gospel, we think of men who are known to us in the main because of their association with Paul. Paul was associated also with three men who from the beginning stood out in their own right as accepted leaders of the New Testament church. In Paul's account of his second visit to Jerusalem, he lists them as James, Cephas, and John, "who seemed to be pillars." The James who is referred to here is not James the Apostle, the brother of John. James the Apostle suffered martyrdom at the hands of Herod about A. D. 44. As Paul's second visit to Jerusalem is usually placed at about A. D. 50, James the Apostle had at this time been dead for six years. The James who is referred to here is James the brother of Jesus, the head of the Jerusalem church and probably the author of the Epistle of James. Cephas is, of course, Peter the Apostle. And John is John the Apostle, the beloved disciple, and the author of the fourth Gospel and the letters which bear his name.

The meeting of Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, with these three outstanding leaders of the early Church is an event of great importance in the history of Christianity. This was not the first meeting of Paul with Peter or with James. Paul's conversion was followed by a brief ministry in Damascus. His preaching there aroused such opposition among the Jews that they sought to slay him. Paul made a dramatic escape from Damascus, being let down from the wall by night in a basket while the soldiers of Aretas,

the king, watched the gates. He went from Damascus to Jerusalem. It was on this visit that Barnabas found him and introduced him to Peter. He saw also James, the Lord's brother, but he did not see John. This visit to Jerusalem was a very brief visit which was cut short by the rising opposition to Paul among the Jews of the city. Paul left for Caesarea and Tarsus and did not return to Jerusalem for fourteen years. Scholars are divided concerning the second visit to Jerusalem mentioned in Galatians. Some identify it with the visit to Jerusalem described in Acts 11:30. Others feel that we have here Paul's description of the visit which he and Barnabas made at the time of the Jerusalem Council. Regardless of the way in which we seek to harmonize the accounts in Acts and in Galatians, the second visit mentioned in Galatians is described by Paul in such detail and in a document of such unquestioned genuineness that we can make it the basis of our study of the relation between Paul and John.

Paul says that he made this visit to Jerusalem with the express purpose of comparing his message with the message of the leaders of the apostles. While his heart must have been filled with respect and love for these men, he does not fall into an idolatrous veneration of them. They, like Paul, were messengers of Christ. And even an apostle needs to remember that "God accepteth no man's person." As our thought now is centered primarily on the meeting of Paul and John, it is well to see the differing backgrounds out of which they came to this meeting. John had been a fisherman of Galilee. He had been next to Jesus at the time of the Lord's Supper. He had witnessed the crucifixion. He was the first to believe in the resurrection. He had played a part second only to Peter in the establishment of the church in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria. Paul was trained as a rabbi and a scholar. For a time he had been the hardened persecutor of the church. After his conversion on the road to Damascus, he had spent part of a brief period of two weeks with Peter and with James. For fourteen years he had carried on a ministry to the Gentiles. The seal of the approval of Christ on his work was the existence of the Gentile church.

At Jerusalem, Paul entered into conference with Peter, James,

and John. He laid before them the Gospel which he preached. At the end of this conference, the four men found themselves in complete agreement in their understanding of the meaning of Christianity. The apostles added nothing new or distinctive to the message which Paul had already been preaching. They found nothing to criticize in the message which Paul and Barnabas had proclaimed to the Gentiles. The apostles did recognize that in a peculiar way Paul had been sent as the Apostle to the Gentiles. This was completely in harmony with Paul's own understanding of his life. This did not mean, however, that Paul would not preach to Jews when he had opportunity. He continued to the end of his life preaching the Gospel first to the Jews. And it certainly did not mean that Peter, John, and James would not preach to Gentiles.

The apostles recognized that the remarkable unity between their message and the message of Paul was not an accident. They perceived that "he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me [Paul] toward the Gentiles."[1] The unity of Paul and the apostles lay in the simple fact that He who had sent forth Peter had also sent forth Paul. The same Christ was at work in both Paul and John. And when the conference was over John gave Paul the right hand of fellowship in expression of his approval of Paul and his message.

The deep unity between Paul and John which is witnessed to in this scene is revealed in their writings. There is no fundamental contradiction between the Christ of the Gospel of John and the Christ of the first three Gospels. The same great supernatural figure meets us in all four Gospels. We do not face here an *either or* but a *both and.* Our thought here is concerned, however, not with the relation of the Christ of John to the Christ of the Synoptics, but with the unity of the witness of Paul and John. The unity between Paul and John is not a unity of words. Often men can use the same words to cover fundamentally different ideas. Consider, for example, the use of the word "democracy" in America and in Russia. The unity of Paul and John is the unity of the fundamental ideas which lie behind their words. They both

believe in the pre-existent Christ. They both believe in the incarnation. John says that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.[2] Paul says that the Son of God was born of woman.[3] They both believe in the atonement. Paul says, "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."[4] John writes: "He loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."[5] They both believe in His resurrection from the dead. They are united in their belief in the reality of the presence of Christ in the hearts of men.

James, Peter, and John perceived the grace that was given to Paul. They understood that He who had wrought effectually in them for apostleship to the Jews was to be identified with the One who was mighty in Paul for the apostleship to the Gentiles. In this insight, Paul and the three reveal a profound understanding of Jesus Christ. They recognize that He is more than a figure of history. They know that He is alive and at work in men and through men today. The significance of Jesus for every age is in His capacity to raise up in every age of human history men who are the instruments of His purpose in the world. The secret of the life of Paul and of the life of John was that the same Christ was working in both of them. He who wrought effectually in Peter and in John, the same was mighty in Paul in the proclamation of the Gospel to the Gentiles. The Christ who meets us here is a living Christ. He is working in our world through His messengers.

Paul and John were at one in the fundamental purpose of their lives. At the close of the twentieth chapter of his Gospel, John says: "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." This was more than the purpose of John's Gospel. It was the purpose of his whole life. And we could not find a finer statement of the purpose of the life of Paul. Paul and John set out to confront men with Jesus Christ. They sought to lead men to believe in Him as the Son of God. They were not content until within our earthly life men through faith laid hold of the eternal life of God. Because he knew that Paul shared his fundamental purpose in life, John could give to him the right hand of fellowship that he should go unto the Gentiles.

PETER 12

"When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed."—Galatians 2:11

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Galatians 1:18—2:16; Acts 15:7-12

Paul and Peter are the two great centers of thought and action in the early Church. We are interested in the relation of Paul to John, the Apostle, and to James, the brother of our Lord. But we are peculiarly interested in the relation of Paul to Peter. All that could be said of the agreement between Paul and John could also be said of the basic agreement in the understanding of the meaning of the Gospel which existed between Paul and Peter. Peter was present at the meeting in Jerusalem when Paul and Barnabas met privately with the three and Paul laid his message before these outstanding representatives of the Church for their approval. Peter perceived the grace that was given to Paul. He saw that the real unity between him and Paul lay in the fact that the same Christ was at work in both of them. Peter also gave to Paul the right hand of fellowship that he should go to the Gentiles. This meeting is not the only evidence of the deep agreement between Peter and Paul. Paul spent two weeks with Peter immediately after his dramatic escape from Damascus. Peter, not Paul, was the first man to be used of God to open the doors of the church to the Gentiles. In the public debate at the Council of Jerusalem, Peter supported the position of Paul. In the First Epistle of Peter, we have an understanding of Christianity which is in harmony with the great ideas of the letters of Paul. Some scholars have even held that Peter must have read the letter to the Ephesians before writing his letter. Second Peter is a disputed Epistle, but in this letter—written by Peter or by a disciple

of his in his name—Paul is referred to as "our beloved brother." The wisdom which was given to him is accepted. The writer appeals to Paul in support of his position concerning the return of the Lord. And Paul's letters are referred to as "scripture."[1]

There are only two places in the New Testament which give any basis for the idea of a division between Paul and Peter. One of these is the twelfth verse of the first chapter of First Corinthians, in which the party of Cephas is referred to as one of the parties in Corinth. Paul does not support these divisions by taking the side of those who claimed his name. Instead he shows the deeper unity in which he and Apollos and Cephas were placed in their common task of being laborers for Christ.

The second passage is the description of the meeting of Paul and Peter in Antioch.[2] After Paul's visit to Jerusalem, which is described in the early part of this chapter, Peter decided to visit the church at Antioch. Peter had ignored the dietary laws of Judaism and the laws of ceremonial uncleanness when he was entertained in the home of Cornelius at Caesarea. He had followed this course under what he was sure was the direct leading of the Holy Spirit. When Peter came to Antioch, he found a church in which the barriers between Jews and Gentiles had been broken down within the fellowship of the church. Jews and Gentiles were both received on the basis of faith. Within the church they mingled in terms of complete equality. When Peter first came to Antioch, he fitted at once into this scheme. He raised no objection to eating with the Gentile Christians. After Peter had been in Antioch a few days a group of Jews came down from Jerusalem. These Jews were members of the Christian community at Jerusalem. But they had not abandoned their observance of many of the minute details of the law of Moses. They belonged to the Jews who believed but were still "zealous of the law." When the time came for the common meal at Antioch these Jews who had come down from Jerusalem separated themselves from the rest of the believers and ate apart.

The next step in the developing situation at Antioch was that Peter decided to separate himself from the Gentile believers and eat with the Jews from Jerusalem. It is not difficult to follow

Peter's reasons for this decision. He himself had broken with his Jewish prejudices in the light of the larger unity of the Christian faith. He had no scruples about "living as a Gentile." But a large section of the Christian community at Jerusalem was still deeply concerned about the continuation of the observance of the law of Moses. To avoid giving offense to this group, Peter decided that as a matter of expediency he would join the group from Jerusalem and sit and eat with them during their visit to Antioch. The next step in the movement was that the Jewish members of the church at Antioch decided to follow the example of Peter. They separated themselves from their Gentile brethren and began to eat apart. The last man to go over was Barnabas. But the example of Peter was too much for Barnabas. Barnabas reluctantly moved over to the table made up exclusively of Jews.

When Paul entered the dining room at Antioch, he saw the Jews from Jerusalem at the head of a table. Peter was eating with them. The Jews of Antioch had gathered in separate groups. Barnabas had joined them. The Gentile Christians were sitting at a table to themselves and were not quite sure whether they really belonged to the inner circles of the Christian community at Antioch. This was the situation that caused Paul to rebuke Peter to his face in the presence of the whole church at Antioch. We do not have the whole of Paul's speech, but we can gather its substance from the report of it we have in Galatians. In the first place, Paul said that Peter and Barnabas and the Christian Jews of Antioch were guilty of hypocrisy. These are hard but true words. The hypocrite is the man who acts a part which does not represent his real convictions. In this scene Peter under the pretense of expediency was acting a part for the benefit of the Jews at Jerusalem. In the second place, Paul said that this action of Peter and Barnabas was a sinful action. This, too, was plain, blunt speech, but it was true to the facts of the situation. It was James who wrote, "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."[3] When there is a chasm between our convictions and our conduct, our action is a sinful action. Peter's convictions in this matter were clear. The trouble was that his conduct did not express his convictions. This is the essence of sin.

In the third place, Paul said that this action which was led by Peter involved by implication a denial of the fundamental truth of the Gospel. Paul rebuked the Christian Jews because he "saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel."[4] According to Paul, the sole condition of membership in the Christian community was the response of faith. The Gospel was a message of salvation addressed on equal terms to all men. What Peter and those who followed him were actually doing was to add to the condition of salvation by faith alone the second condition of "obedience to the law."

We do not know the response of Peter to the rebuke of Paul. The great probability is that Peter accepted the rebuke and thanked Paul for it. But the issue which was raised in this scene in the church at Antioch is an issue that is vital today. What Paul really faced at Antioch was the beginning of segregation within the Christian Church. Paul was defending the right of every man who has entered the Christian community through the response of faith to stand within the Christian fellowship on terms of complete equality.

In the great struggle with Fascism in Germany, Karl Barth invoked the same principle. Barth wrote: "The fellowship of those belonging to the Church is not determined by blood, therefore, not by race, but by the Holy Spirit and Baptism. If the German Evangelical Church excludes Jewish Christians, or treats them as of a lower grade, she ceases to be a Christian Church."[5] Paul invoked this principle to defend the right of the Gentiles to stand with the Jews on terms of equality in the Christian fellowship. Barth in our generation invoked the same principle to defend the right of the Christian Jew to stand within the church on terms of equality with those of Nordic blood. In either case it was an attack upon discriminations within the church which are based on race rather than upon such essentially Christian concepts as the calling of the Holy Spirit, faith, and baptism.

We quote this passage from Karl Barth with approval as we think of the struggle for the existence of the church in obedience to the Word of God in Germany. But if we will change a few words the principle becomes equally relevant to religious life in

America. Barth might have written: "The fellowship of those belonging to the Church is not determined by blood, therefore not by race, but by the Holy Spirit and Baptism. If the American Evangelical Church excludes Negro Christians, or treats them as of a lower grade, she ceases to be a Christian Church."

In the scene between Peter and Paul at Antioch, it becomes clear that the Christian message as it was set forth in the New Testament was intended to be a message addressed on equal terms to all men, that the sole condition of membership in the New Testament Church was the response of faith, and that those who entered the Christian fellowship were members of a society in which all men were to be received on terms of complete equality. This was the meaning of New Testament Christianity.

JAMES 13

"... James the Lord's brother."—Galatians 1:19

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 15:13-29; 21:18-25; Galatians 1:19; 2:1-16

We are indebted to the incidental reference of Paul in Galatians 1:19 for our knowledge of the fact that James, the head of the Jerusalem church, was known in the church as the Lord's brother. When the people of Nazareth list the brothers of Jesus, the first named is James.[1] Catholics who hold to the perpetual virginity of Mary seek to explain the reference to the brethren of the Lord in various ways—the most plausible of which is the suggestion that they were the children of Joseph by a former wife. But most Protestants accept the story in its obvious meaning. They believe that Jesus was the first-born of Mary but that after the birth of Jesus she gave birth to four sons and at least two daughters. James, the oldest of these children, grew up with Jesus in the intimacy of the home at Nazareth. We would like to ask James many things about the boy Jesus in the life of the home. But the veil of silence hangs over these years.

It is fair to assume that James was with his mother and the rest of the brothers when they came to Jesus while He was engaged in His public ministry.[2] The suggestion of the narrative seems to be that they had come to persuade Him to give up His ministry of preaching and to return to the home at Nazareth. It is in this situation that Jesus says that His spiritual kinship with those who do the will of His Father is more important than the physical tie that exists between Him and His mother or brothers or sisters. It is probable that the words of His brethren to Jesus in John 7:3-4 are the words of James as the spokesman of the

group. His brothers say to Jesus: "Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world." At the conclusion of this speech of the brothers, John adds the comment, "For neither did his brethren believe in him."[3]

James was led from unbelief to faith by the appearance to him of the risen Lord.[4] Concerning this appearance Schaff writes: "It is more fully reported in an interesting fragment of the 'Gospel according to the Hebrews' (one of the oldest and least fabulous of the apocryphal Gospels), which shows the sincerity and earnestness of James even before his conversion. He had sworn, we are here told, 'that he would not eat bread from that hour wherein the Lord had drunk the cup [of his passion] until he should see him rising from the dead.' The Lord appeared to him and communed with him, giving bread to James the Just and saying: 'My brother, eat thy bread, for the Son of man is risen from them that sleep.' "[5] While we cannot be sure of the accuracy of this story, we do know that the risen Lord appeared to James and that the brethren of the Lord are found with His mother and with the apostles in the list of those who gathered in the upper room in Jerusalem to wait for the coming of the Spirit.[6] The brethren of the Lord are mentioned by Paul in I Corinthians 9:5. This was written about twenty-five years after the incident described in Acts. From this reference it is fair to conclude that the brethren of the Lord stood in high regard in the New Testament church. It would seem also that the brethren of the Lord (which would include James) were married.

From the middle of the narrative of Acts, James appears as the head of the church at Jerusalem. He seems to have interpreted his commission in terms of preaching the Gospel to the Jews at Jerusalem. He may have left Jerusalem at times, but every reference to him in the New Testament is to him in his work at Jerusalem.

Paul met with James at least three times. In the hurried visit which he made to Jerusalem to see Peter after his escape from

Damascus, he tells us that he saw also James, the Lord's brother.[7] Fourteen years later, when Paul returned to Jerusalem to lay his Gospel before the leaders of the Jerusalem church, he tells us that he met with James, Peter, and John. It is significant that in listing these three, Paul mentions James first. James joined with Peter and John in placing the approval of the leaders of the church at Jerusalem on the Gospel which Paul was preaching, and James gave to Paul the right hand of fellowship that he should go to the Gentiles. In the public debate at the Council of Jerusalem which probably followed this private conference, James supports the position of Paul and makes the speech which brings about the unanimous decision of the conference. The group which came down from Jerusalem to Antioch and refused to eat with the Gentile Christians there were reported to have come from James. But how far the conduct of these men in Antioch would have had the official support of James must remain a matter of conjecture. When Paul makes his final trip to Jerusalem eight years later, Paul and James meet as Christian brothers. At this time, James urges on Paul a policy designed to conciliate the feelings of the Jewish Christians toward Paul, which Paul accepts. After this, James drops out of the New Testament narrative. Josephus writes: "He [Ananus] assembled the sanhedrim of judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James, and some of his companions; and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned."[8] This is probably the earliest undisputed reference to Jesus in secular literature. In it, Josephus identifies James as the brother of Jesus and says that Jesus was called Christ.

On the basis of this study, it is possible to define more closely the relation between Paul and James. Paul was called to be the Apostle to the Gentiles. His task was to proclaim the Gospel to the Gentiles and to defend the right of the Gentiles to stand within the church on terms of complete equality with the Jews. The mission of James was to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. His life purpose was to win the Jews to the faith, to ease the passage of the sons of Israel from Judaism to Christianity, and to seek to keep the Jews from leaving the church in protest when

the Gentiles began to enter the church in great numbers. James had no sympathy with the Judaizers. He did not seek to force the Gentiles to become Jews in order to become Christians. He had no desire to bind circumcision and the keeping of the law of Moses on the conscience of the Gentile Christians. The point at issue between James and Paul was over the attitude of the Jewish Christians to circumcision and the law of Moses. Paul and Peter both felt that Christianity had set them free from the bondage to the law. When among the Gentiles, they lived as the Gentiles. James probably felt that for the Jewish Christians it was better for them to combine the acceptance of Christianity with the continuance of the customs of their fathers. He probably knew that in time these customs would pass away. That which is rendered unnecessary for salvation will in time be discarded. But to ease the passage of the Jews to Christianity and to seek to keep the Christian Jews from leaving the church and returning to Judaism, James felt that for the time it was best for them to continue to observe the customs of their people. James stands for the freedom of the Gentiles, but he always speaks from the point of view of the Jewish Christian. He was anxious in so far as it was possible to avoid giving offense to the Jewish conscience. Paul and James were not far apart. Paul also was deeply concerned to win and hold the Jews for Christ. Paul and James stood together. Paul laid his hand on the Gentile wing of the Church. James led the Jewish section of the Church. Together they sought to preserve the unity of New Testament Christianity. The Church could not divide when Paul and James stood together as Christian brothers.

The martyred brother of our Lord continues to make his impact on the Church through the letter which bears his name. This famous Epistle is not lacking in depth of thought or in the clarity of its witness to Jesus Christ. James ignores his unique relation to Jesus and is content to call himself the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.[9] He acknowledges Jesus to be the Lord of glory.[10] He refers to the Gospel message as "the implanted word, which is able to save your souls."[11] He waits patiently for the coming of his Lord.[12] But James is known for his emphasis on

the practical application of the Gospel in the common life of man. He insists that the faith which does not transform the life cannot be depended upon to save the soul. In this, he is close to Jesus. Jesus was not interested in having men call Him "Lord, Lord," unless they were ready to seek to do the will of God.[13] James joins with Paul in condemning all those who show partiality as they hold the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ.[14] His words here could have been quoted by Paul in the famous scene at Antioch.[15] James insists that a religion that is to be acceptable before God must involve the visiting of the orphans and widows in their affliction and a man's keeping himself unspotted from the world. Religion meant for him purity of life and the dedication of life to the service of human need. The Church today needs to hear both James and Paul as they interpret the meaning of being a Christian in our life situations today.

LYDIA 14

"And a certain woman named Lydia . . . whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul."—Acts 16:14 (A.S.V.)

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 16:6-15, 40

We have in our background of Scripture two stories. The first is the account of the coming of Christianity to Europe. The second introduces us to a woman named Lydia. The two stories flow together when Lydia finds her Lord and becomes the firstfruits of Europe for Christ.

Paul and Silas were on what is usually known as the second missionary journey. They had visited again the churches established in Paul's first journey. At Lystra they had added Timothy to their party as an attendant. Paul's plan was to preach the Gospel in the Roman province of Asia. About four years later he did go to Asia. With Ephesus as the center of his activities he carried on a most successful program of evangelism for this section of the Empire. But at this time the Holy Spirit forbade him to enter Asia. He planned then to go to Bithynia, but again the Holy Spirit closed the door. Paul and his friends went on to Troas. Luke joined them at Troas and the four men in response to the Macedonian call crossed the sea and made their way to Philippi.

When we think of all that Christianity has meant to the continent of Europe and of all that the people of Europe have contributed in carrying the Christian faith to the rest of the world, we naturally pause to appreciate the far-reaching significance of the first known entrance of Christian missionaries to Europe. We need to remember, however, that in the first century there was no clear distinction between the peoples of Europe and Asia in

this section of the Roman Empire. Asia Minor and the Greek peninsula were both centers of a great Greek civilization.

On the first Sabbath after their arrival in Philippi, Paul and his three companions made their way to a place by the river where they had heard that "prayer was wont to be made." As a part of their religious ceremonies the Jews performed a number of "washings" and it was customary therefore for them to meet for worship at some appropriate spot by the banks of a stream. Paul hoped at this point to establish a contact with some of the Jews of the city. He was not to be disappointed.

After waiting a few minutes he saw a group of women coming out of the city to hold a prayer meeting. Among them there was a woman named Lydia. She was from Thyatira, a city of Asia Minor. The church at Thyatira is mentioned fourth among the seven churches of Asia in the Book of Revelation. Lydia must have been a woman of some wealth. She carried on in Philippi her business as a seller of purple dyes. She had a home in Philippi. She had her household with her. And she had room enough in her home to entertain Paul and his company.

Luke tells us that Lydia "worshipped God." She was a woman of pagan background who had been attracted by the high moral teachings of Judaism. There was much that was unattractive about first-century Judaism, but there was in Israel a knowledge of God which was not to be found in the pagan world. In the heart of Lydia there was a yearning for the knowledge of the true God. She did not find spiritual satisfaction in the idolatries of the Greeks and the Romans. She lived among the Greeks. The Greek thinkers had sought by philosophy to find the answer to the deepest questions of the universe. But Lydia had not found the answer to her questions in the wisdom of the Greeks. The probability is that Lydia had not become a Jew, but she joined with the Jews in their worship of the God who had revealed Himself to Israel. Lydia and others like her were known as devout proselytes. These Gentiles were closely associated with Judaism because they found there a knowledge of God and a moral code which was not to be found in paganism. The devout proselytes were the bridge through which Christianity passed from Judaism

to the pagan world. As a devout proselyte Lydia would know the Old Testament. She must have been familiar with the prophetic literature and through it with Israel's hope of a coming Messiah. While she had found in Judaism something that was infinitely superior to the pagan idolatries, we can be sure that the heart of Lydia was not completely satisfied. She may have gone to the prayer meeting by the river bank on that Sabbath afternoon to pray for a fuller revelation of the God who had spoken to the fathers through the prophets.

We do not know just how Paul and his party established contact with this group of women who came on that Sabbath day to the place of prayer. We do know that Paul preached unto them the word of the Lord. We do not know the content of his speech, but from his other speeches we can guess the general movement of his thought. He must have announced to these women the glad news that the God who had formerly spoken to their fathers by the prophets had in these days spoken through His Son. He must have told in part the story of Jesus of Nazareth as a man approved of God through His mighty works, who went about doing good. He must have described the rejection of Jesus by His own people. The account of the crucifixion would lead at once to the glad witness to the resurrection as the event through which Jesus was declared with power to be the Son of God. Probably Paul told also the experiences of his own life, of his opposition to Jesus of Nazareth and his conversion to Christianity on the road to Damascus when the living Lord met him and conquered him. To these women, Paul boldly proclaimed Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. He urged them to accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

Luke says that the Lord opened the heart of Lydia "that she attended unto the things that were spoken of Paul." When Paul talked to Lydia by the bank of the river outside the city of Philippi the living Lord was present, unseen but very real. He had guided Paul and his party to this spot that through their witness He might answer the prayer of this woman whose restless heart was seeking Him. He was present as the unseen Companion of these missionaries as they took the first step in the winning of a

continent to Him. Had He not said to His followers, "Go . . . make disciples of all nations . . . and lo, I am with you always"?[1] All Christian preaching is ventured on the assumption that the living Lord speaks through His messenger.

The Lord is present and *active* in this story. He opened *the heart* of Lydia that she might attend unto the things that were spoken by Paul. We do not know just how the Lord opened her heart. We know that He never violates a human personality. When we say that God is love we must also affirm that man is free. But those who acknowledge Jesus as Lord always feel that their very capacity to believe is His gift to them. We have this expressed in the words of the familiar hymn:

> "I sought the Lord, and afterward I knew
> He moved my soul to seek Him, seeking me;
> It was not I that found, O Saviour true;
> No, I was found of Thee."[2]

Regardless of how we explain it, we know that in this service Lydia found her Lord. The risen Christ confronted Lydia with all of His claims on her life. Lydia yielded her heart to Him. She accepted Him as her Lord and her Saviour. She found herself confronted by a living Person to whom she gave her all. Faith is always more than the acceptance of a creed. It must involve the yielding of life to a Person whom we acknowledge to be the Lord.

Lydia passed at once from the inner act of faith to the outward act of public confession. Faith should always involve the unity of belief and confession. Confession without belief is hypocrisy. But belief without confession is secret discipleship. Our Lord insists that if we acknowledge Him to be the Lord we should confess Him before men. Lydia asked Paul to administer to her the sacrament of baptism as "the sign and seal of her engrafting into Christ and her engagement to be the Lord's."[3]

When Lydia made this step there were a number of other women who followed her. Among them were those of her own household. When the service was finished that afternoon there was a believing community in the city of Philippi. The Lord through the preaching of Paul had established His church in

Philippi. This little group of believing women were the first-fruits of Europe for Christ. The first church in Europe was for a time composed entirely of women. They were the firstfruits of what was to be a mighty multitude which no man can number. Who can say what Christianity has meant to Europe or what Christianity has done in elevating the position of woman among the peoples of Europe. Lydia immediately made her home the center of the Christian witness in Philippi. She did this as an expression of her loyalty to her Lord. We can be sure that this was her first act in a life of devotion to His service.

GALLIO 15

"Gallio was proconsul of Achaia."—Acts 18:12 (R.S.V.)
"And Gallio cared for none of those things."—Acts 18:17

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 18:11-18

In the *Life and Epistles of Paul* by Conybeare and Howson, published in 1892, we find the following paragraph: "One of the proconsuls who were sent out to govern the province of Achaia in the course of St. Paul's second missionary journey was Gallio. His original name was Annaeus Novatus, and he was the brother of Annaeus Seneca the philosopher. The name under which he is known to us in sacred and secular history was due to his adoption into the family of Junius Gallio the rhetorician. The time of his government at Corinth, as indicated by the sacred historian, must be placed between the years 52 and 54, if the dates we have assigned to St. Paul's movements be correct. We have no exact information on this subject from any secular source, nor is he mentioned by any heathen writer as having been proconsul of Achaia. But there are some incidental notices of his life, which give rather a curious confirmation of what is advanced above. We are informed by Tacitus and Dio that he died in the year 65. Pliny says that *after his consulship* he had a serious illness, for the removal of which he tried a sea-voyage: and from Seneca we learn that it was *in Achaia* that his brother went on shipboard for the benefit of his health. If we knew the year of Gallio's consulship, our chronological result would be brought within narrow limits. We do not possess this information."[1]

This was written before 1892. About 1908, scholars discovered four fragments of a Delphic inscription. An exhaustive treatment of their significance is given in Appendix I of Adolph

Deissmann's *Paul*. It is sufficient for our purposes to say that most scholars are now agreed that these fragments establish beyond question the pronconsulship of Gallio and that the date of his coming to Corinth can be fixed with certainty as July of either A. D. 51 or A. D. 52, probably the former. This gives us a fixed date in our study of the life of Paul. It enables us to date within a margin of error of not more than a year the letter to the Romans and the letters to the Corinthians. The net effect of this discovery is to push back about two years what used to be the accepted dates in the chronology of the life of Paul.

The discovery of these fragments brings home to us again the realization that in studying the personalities around Paul we are dealing with actual men and women, many of whom are known to us from the pages of history. Gallio was one of the best of the Romans who came into contact with Paul. His brother Seneca was the greatest of the Roman philosophers. He speaks of Gallio "with singular affection; not only as a man of integrity and honesty, but as one who won universal regard by his amiable temper and popular manners."[2] Lumby in his study of Acts says: "He is spoken of as 'Sweet Gallio,' and Seneca declares that 'those who love him to the utmost, don't love him enough.' "[3]

As a philosopher, Gallio must have joined with his brother Seneca in the quest for the good life. There were two basic answers to this question in the world in which Gallio lived. Paul at Mars Hill had encountered among the philosophers the Epicureans and the Stoics. The Epicureans said that the good is the thing which brings us pleasure. God has so made us that when we follow the right we usually experience a sense of satisfaction. In the long run the way of righteousness is the way of happiness. Many of the Epicureans had a reasonably satisfactory philosophy of life. They sought to live in such a manner that they attained life's deepest satisfactions. But in the popular mind the Epicurean philosophy was apt to degenerate into a mad search for pleasure as the one goal of life. We do not find happiness that way. In contrast to the Epicureans, Seneca was a Stoic. The Stoics were the noblest of the philosophers of the ancient world. They held that men should do the right regardless of the pleasure or pain

they expected to experience. They sought to find mastery of life through the discipline of their emotions. The true Stoic was not expected to show joy or sorrow. In popular thought today the word still carries the idea of a man who will not reveal his feelings. The Stoics moved on a far higher plane than the Epicureans, but they had not found the answers to the deepest secrets of life.

Gallio, the brother of Seneca, came to Corinth as proconsul probably in July of A. D. 51. Soon after he arrived, the Jews aroused a mob which seized Paul and brought him before the judgment seat of Gallio on the charge of persuading men to worship God contrary to the law. The charge had some legal standing. Judaism was a recognized religion within the Roman Empire. And the various religious communities were permitted to exercise discipline within their own community of faith. Paul had gone to Damascus with letters from the high priest to arrest Christians in Damascus. Probably the Roman law gave the Jews the right to enforce uniformity of belief within their own religious group. But while the charge had some legal basis it had no appeal to the prejudices of the Roman population. Demetrius of Ephesus could have taught the Jews of Corinth something about working up an effective mob.

While we must think highly of the character of Gallio, we cannot completely excuse his conduct in the hearing of this trial. He heard the charges of the Jews and then dismissed the case without even giving Paul a chance to speak in his defense. Gallio said to the Jews, "If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: but if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters."[4] Gallio did not seriously investigate the issues involved in the case before him. He was interested in questions of right and wrong or cases of flagrant immorality, but he was not interested in questions that moved in the field of religion. In the ancient world, religion was so completely divorced from morality that it probably never occurred to him that the only sound basis of ethics was to be found in the truths of revealed religion. And we cannot ignore his conduct in looking on with indifference while the Greeks gave

Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, a beating before the judgment seat. Sosthenes may have deserved some punishment for instigating the mob, but Gallio the Roman judge looked on with indifference while the Greeks took the administering of justice into their own hands.

It is to be regretted that Gallio did not have time to listen to the speech that Paul was about to make. When Paul stood before Gallio two great streams of thought in the ancient world met in the persons of their ablest exponents. Gallio is typical of the best type of character that Greek and Roman philosophy could produce. Paul is one of the greatest Christians who ever lived.

We know from the letter to the Corinthians what Paul might have said to Gallio if he had had a chance to make his speech. He would have told Gallio that it was the wisdom of God that the world by wisdom should not know God.[5] The philosophy of the Greeks and the Romans had failed to reach an adequate knowledge of God or an adequate basis for character. Even in Athens, the city of the philosophers, the spirit of Paul had "stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry."[6]

Paul might have asked Gallio for the answer to some of the questions which Greek philosophy for all its show of wisdom could not answer. Was there purpose in the universe? What could be done about sin? How could a bad man be made good? What was the value of the individual? Was there a revelation in which the living God had made Himself known to men? These and similar questions would have revealed the failure of philosophy to give a satisfactory answer to the ultimate questions which face mankind.

Paul would have pointed Gallio to "Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."[7] Paul could have pointed Gallio to a believing community made up of both Jews and Greeks who had found in "Christ crucified" the answer to man's deepest needs—the need for knowledge and the need for power. In God's redemptive act in Jesus Christ there was a revelation of the char-

acter of God which was not dreamed of in the philosophy of Gallio. God had revealed here what eye had not seen, what ear had not heard, what had not entered into the heart of man. And in man's response to the revelation of God in Christ there was a power for righteous living which was not to be found in the best of human philosophy. It is a great pity that Gallio did not have time to listen to Paul.

PHEBE 16

"I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea."—Romans 16:1

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Romans 16:1-2; Galatians 3:28

In the King James Version of the Bible, we find at the close of the letter to the Romans the footnote: "Written to the Romans from Corinthus, and sent by Phebe servant of the church at Cenchrea." This footnote is not part of the inspired text and will not be found in the more modern versions. But there is no reason to doubt that it represents here a tradition which is based on the facts. We can be reasonably certain that Phebe was the bearer of the letter to the Romans. Paul trusted to this woman of Cenchrea the delivery of the original manuscript of one of the most important documents ever to come from the pen of man. It was written about twenty-five years after the death of Christ. It reveals man's need of a Saviour. It sets forth with great power the central doctrine of salvation by faith alone. It wrestles with the mystery of unbelief. And it gives practical advice concerning the Christian life in the midst of a pagan society. The proof that Phebe accomplished her mission and delivered the letter is found in the presence of this letter in our New Testament today.

Paul commends Phebe to the Romans as "our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea." Cenchrea was the port of Corinth on the east. Corinth was located on a narrow isthmus, and the commercial significance of the city was that goods were hauled by wagons across the isthmus and shipped again for Ephesus and Asia. The church at Cenchrea must have been founded when Paul carried on his ministry at Corinth about

four years before he wrote the letter to the Romans. Paul commends Phebe as *servant* of the church which is at Cenchrea. The Greek word which is used here is the feminine form of the word which is usually translated deacon. We would not do violence to the Greek language if we translated the expression as "Phebe our sister, a deaconness of the church which is at Cenchrea." While the word does not carry the full technical sense of the office of deaconness which is found for example in the churches of Bithynia about A. D. 100, it does seem to indicate that Phebe was known to the Christian community as deaconness of the church at Cenchrea.

It is appropriate here for us to comment on the place of women in the Pauline world church. Paul is on the whole not too popular with women. He told the women at Corinth to keep quiet in the churches. He even suggested that if they wanted to learn anything it would be well for them to ask their husbands at home.[1] In this, Paul reflects the attitude toward woman which was characteristic of his time. It is part of the local and temporary which is mingled with his teaching. But Paul recognized the genuine faith of Lois and Eunice. He rejoiced when the faith of this mother and grandmother came alive in the life of young Timothy. Immediately after his commendation of Phebe he refers to Priscilla and Aquila as "my helpers in Christ Jesus." It is noteworthy that in three of the six times he refers to this couple he mentions Priscilla first.[2] The church in Europe began with a group of women who became believers at Philippi. Paul proclaimed the Gospel on equal terms to both men and women. And in his letter to the Galatians he boldly laid down the far-reaching principle that in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female.[3] Wherever the Gospel has been preached it has purified family life and elevated the condition of woman. We would go beyond Paul's practice but we would be loyal to his inner principle if we built a Christian society in which men and women stood in terms of complete equality. Woman held a place of honor and dignity in the Pauline world church. The respect for the personality of woman which was inherent in the Gospel was working as leaven in the Christian society of the first century.

The Gospel should be proclaimed on equal terms to all individuals regardless of sex. And the ultimate goal of the Christian society should be the removal of those restrictions in which woman because of her sex is prevented from taking her full place in the inner life of the Christian communion.

Phebe found in her church a fellowship in which she was rescued from the sense of loneliness which is so often characteristic of the individual in a secular society. Paul when he commends her to the church at Rome calls her Phebe, *our sister.* It is evident that through their common surrender to Jesus as Lord, Paul and Phebe had been set in a relation in which he could refer to her as his sister in Christ. Within the fellowship of the Christian church there is possible a fellowship between men and women which moves on a plane which is almost unknown in secular society. Paul tells Timothy to treat "the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity."[4] There are dangers involved in the freedom of fellowship between men and women which can be found in the Christian community. Paul needs to close his injunction to Timothy with the phrase "with all purity." We can never completely ignore the differences which are involved in the fact of sex. But in a brotherhood which is composed of those who have acknowledged Jesus as Lord, these dangers can be overcome. The Christian church can be the place for the formation of enriching friendships between men and women. Out of these friendships there may come to some the deeper experiences of love and marriage. But both the married and the single should find in the church the opportunity for the meeting of the sexes in a common devotion to Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

Phebe moved in the fellowship of the church at Cenchrea. She must have been at home also in the larger fellowship of the Christian community at Corinth. And as a Christian of the first century she was part of a brotherhood which was the basis of a new society in the Roman Empire. When Paul wrote the letter to the Romans, Phebe was leaving Corinth on a journey to Rome. The suggestion of verse 2 is that she had some business matters of her own to attend to in Rome. Paul tells the Christians of Rome

to receive her in the Lord as becometh saints and to assist her in whatsoever business she has need of them. She went as a stranger to Rome but she found that in Rome as in Corinth she was part of a brotherhood of those who were ready to become her friends and to help her when she had need of them. The communion of saints can be an enriching experience on a world-wide basis.

Phebe found in her church an opportunity for service which rescued her life from a sense of futility. She was appointed deaconness of the church which is at Cenchrea. We do not know in full the nature of this office. But from our understanding of the task of the first deacons we can be sure that part of Phebe's work was a ministry in the name of her church to the poor and needy of her community. The church at Cenchrea was hardly four years old. It did not possess a building as a place to meet for worship. But this church carried on a ministry in the name of her Lord to the poor of Cenchrea. It is not difficult to see Phebe as she takes her part in this work. Probably much of her ministry was to other women. She could go to women in a way that the deacons of her church could not. This ministry was part of the fellowship of the church in Cenchrea.

In his commendation of Phebe, Paul writes: "She hath been a *succourer* of many, and of myself also." The Greek word which is used here has in it the idea of a *patron*. It suggests that Phebe was a person of some wealth and influence. In this capacity she had been a patron of the church at Cenchrea. We can be sure she took her full part in that hospitality which was an outstanding characteristic of the early Church. She had a home at one of the centers of trade and commerce. The Christians as they passed up and down the Greek peninsula would come to her home. Those who crossed the peninsula on their way to Ephesus would also come to Cenchrea. When Paul commends Phebe to the hospitality of the church at Rome he says that it is appropriate that she should be helped as she has helped many.

Phebe had the privilege of ministering to Paul. Perhaps she kept a prophet's chamber to which Paul was always welcome. He may have gone to her home for rest and for the rebuilding of his strength for the tasks ahead of him. Her ministry to him may

have reached far beyond the hospitality of her home. She may have been an early convert of his ministry at Corinth who played a large part in starting the church in Cenchrea. We do know that Paul remembers the help she had given to others and to him.

If you will read carefully the sixteenth chapter of Romans you will see that one of its key phrases is the expression "in the Lord." Paul uses it when he asks the Christians at Rome to receive Phebe in the Lord as becometh saints. Phebe had surrendered herself to Jesus as Lord. Because she was in Him she found that she was in a new community, an accepted member of the brotherhood of believers. Because she was "in the Lord" she found that she was one of those through whom Jesus Christ was accomplishing His purpose in her world.

PRISCILLA AND AQUILA 17

"Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus."—Romans 16:3

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 18:1-3, 18, 26; Romans 16:3-5; I Corinthians 16:19; II Timothy 4:19

Aquila and Priscilla were an interesting couple. Paul formed with them an intimate friendship which began when he came to Corinth and continued through the time of his writing of II Timothy—a period of more than fifteen years. The name Aquila means "eagle." The name Priscilla means "little old woman." The abbreviation "Prisca" which is also applied to her means "old woman."[1] Aquila was a Jew from Pontus—a province on the edge of the Roman Empire that did not come under the control of Rome until this territory was conquered by Pompey in his victories in the East before his fatal conflict with Julius Caesar. The probability is that Priscilla was also of the Jewish race. But her name was a familiar name for women among the first families of Rome and it is possible that she was of Gentile origin. Priscilla is mentioned first in three of the six references to this couple. As it was unusual for a woman to be mentioned before her husband, it is fair to assume that Priscilla was the stronger personality.

When Paul finds Priscilla and Aquila in Corinth, they have recently come to this city from Rome. Luke tells us in a parenthesis that they had left Italy "because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome."[2] The reference is, of course, to Claudius Caesar, emperor of Rome from A. D. 41 through A. D. 54. The order of the emperor banishing all the Jews from Rome is an indication of the anti-Semitism which existed in the Roman Empire in the first century. The decree of Claudius expelling the Jews from Rome probably came about A. D. 50. This reference

to the order of Claudius is one of the many places at which the story of Paul touches the secular history of his time.

It is interesting to study on the basis of the references to them in the New Testament the movements of Aquila and Priscilla in the various parts of the Roman Empire. Aquila was born in Pontus. He and his wife were living in Rome at the time of the decree of Claudius banishing the Jews from Rome. As victims of this persecution of the Jews, they were forced to move to Corinth. When Paul left Corinth he took them with him to Ephesus. When he writes I Corinthians from Ephesus, Aquila and Priscilla are with him and join in the greetings sent to the church at Corinth. A little later when he writes the letter to the Romans they are back in Rome. When Paul writes II Timothy (probably from Rome in A. D. 67) he sends through Timothy greetings to Aquila and Priscilla. The freedom and extent of the movement of population in the Roman Empire is an indication of the comparative peace and prosperity which the Empire was enjoying at this time.

By trade, Aquila and Priscilla were tentmakers. This was the first thing that Paul found in common with them. He was of the same craft. When Paul came to Corinth he was alone. Silas and Timothy did not join him for some time. He had left Berea in haste and had made a brief stay in Athens. Probably he was without funds for his own support. But he found Aquila and Priscilla. They took him in. He lived with them, and the three of them worked together at the trade of making tents. In this way Paul was able to support himself during his stay in Corinth. The friendship of Paul with Priscilla and Aquila is therefore an indication of the identification of Paul with the laboring masses of the world. Gandhi used to spin for a fixed number of hours each day in order that he might not lose his touch with the toiling masses of India. Paul did not spin but he did make tents, even as Jesus in the days of His flesh worked as a carpenter. Paul's reasons for working as a tentmaker were not as complicated as Gandhi's. Paul worked that he might earn the money for his own support. He worked that he might have something to give to those in need. He tells the Ephesians, "I have coveted no man's silver, or

gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."[3] The center of Paul's interest was not in tentmaking, but he knew how to make tents. As we get the picture of Paul, Aquila, and Priscilla working together in Corinth at the craft of making tents, we know that the great theologian and missionary knew also how to earn his living by working with his hands.

In the letter to the Romans, Paul writes: "Greet Priscilla and Aquila *my helpers in Christ Jesus.*"[4] These three worked together in the making of tents. But tentmaking was to them merely a means of paying expenses as they worked at the task of preaching the Gospel of Christ Jesus. We do not know whether or not Priscilla and Aquila were converts of Paul. They may have been won to the Christian faith before Paul found them in Corinth. But Paul laid the foundation of the work at Corinth. The probability is that he found Aquila and Priscilla as devout Jews. He worked with them because he and they were of the same craft. And he led them to know Him whom to know aright is life eternal. We know that Aquila and Priscilla dedicated their lives to the life purpose of Paul. They worked with him as his helpers in Christ Jesus.

There are at least three ways in which Aquila and Priscilla served as helpers in Christ Jesus. In the first place they made their home a center of Christian influence. In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul writes: "The churches of Asia send greetings. Aquila and Prisca, *together with the church in their house,* send you hearty greetings in the Lord."[5] When these two went to Ephesus, they made a home there. At the heart of their home there was a common love for each other which was enriched by a common devotion to Jesus Christ. No one ever thought of these two except as they thought of them together. There were no church buildings in those days. The Christians met where they could. In time there grew up in Ephesus a community of believers that met in the home of Aquila and Priscilla. When Paul writes to the

Romans, Aquila and Priscilla are in Rome. And in Rome as in Ephesus, their home is the meeting place of a Christian community.[6] We can be sure that this was true of them wherever they went. Who can measure the influence for good of this Christian home that always became the center of a Christian community?

In the second place, Aquila and Priscilla were used of God to lead Apollos to the fulness of the Christian faith. The contact with Apollos came while Aquila and Priscilla were left at Ephesus in charge of the work there during one of Paul's visits to Antioch. Apollos was a brilliant man. He was a Jew from Alexandria. He came to Ephesus "and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John."[7] It seems impossible to us that more than twenty years after the death of Christ there could have been educated Jews who knew the baptism of John but did not know the fulfillment of John's message in the work of Jesus. But a little later Paul found a similar group in Ephesus.[8] With infinite tact, the tentmakers from Corinth called aside the brilliant orator from Alexandria "and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly."[9] They did their work so well that Apollos accepted the fuller faith of Aquila and Priscilla. When he went on to Corinth, "he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ."[10] Apollos became one of the greatest preachers of the early Church. He developed the church in Corinth. But when we think of Apollos we should never forget the man and his wife who led this brilliant scholar and preacher to a full faith. When we lead a person to Christ we never know the possibilities in the service of God that may lie in the dedication of one life to God in Christ.

In the third place, Aquila and Priscilla saved the life of Paul. Paul says of them, "Greet Prisca and Aquila . . . who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I but also all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks."[11] We do not know just what Paul is referring to here. We do know that the incident happened before he wrote the letter to the Romans. Paul's life was in danger. Aquila and Priscilla risked their lives to save Paul. In so doing they earned not only the gratitude of Paul but also the gratitude of the whole Gentile church. The Christian world

today owes to them a similar debt of gratitude. If they had not risked their lives to save Paul, the letter to the Romans would never have been written. We would never have had Ephesians, or Philippians or Colossians or the Pastoral Epistles. These two were used of God to save the life of the great apostle and to enable him to finish his work. The full fruitage of their courageous and unselfish action will not be reaped until men cease to read the letters of Paul.

APOLLOS 18

"I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase."—I Corinthians 3:6
"We are labourers together with God."—I Corinthians 3:9

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 18:24—19:1; I Corinthians 1:10-12; 3:4-9, 22-23; 4:6; 16:12; Titus 3:13

Apollos was a Jew of Alexandria. The city of Alexandria was located in Egypt at the mouth of the Nile. It was founded by Alexander the Great and was named for him. In the time of Paul, it had a population of between six and seven hundred thousand. As the port of Egypt, it was recognized as the second city of the Roman Empire. Alexandria had a large colony of Jews who enjoyed equal rights with the other citizens of the city. This city was a center of learning in the ancient world. The Jewish religion and Greek culture met here. The Hebrew Old Testament was translated into Greek in Alexandria about one hundred and fifty years before the birth of Christ. When the New Testament was written, this Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, which is commonly known as the Septuagint, had become the acepted Bible of Greek-speaking Jews. Apollos came from this great center of learning in the ancient world.

Apollos is further described as an eloquent man who was mighty in the Scriptures. Apollos was a great orator. When he stood up to speak, words flowed easily and fluently from his lips. He was a great scholar who was deeply grounded in his knowledge of the holy writings of his people. His eloquence and his mastery of the Scriptures were to stand him in good stead in his career as a Christian preacher.

Unto this man who was trained as a scholar, a thinker, and a speaker in the intellectual life of the Jewish colony of Alexandria, there had come a man who was a disciple of John the

Baptist. Apollos also became a disciple who knew only the baptism of John. He knew John's predictions that the time for the coming of the Messiah was near. He called men to repentance that they might be ready for the coming of the Christ. A little later when Paul came to Ephesus he found a group of twelve disciples who had received the baptism of John and had not so much as heard of the Holy Spirit.

Apollos came to Ephesus preaching the baptism of John. In Ephesus he met with Aquila and Priscilla. It would be interesting to picture the scene when Aquila and Priscilla heard Apollos speak in the synagogue at Ephesus. Slowly it dawned on these two that this brilliant orator and scholar knew the baptism of John with its witness concerning the coming of the Christ but that he had never heard of Jesus of Nazareth. He knew nothing of the story of the life, the teaching, the example, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus. He had never heard of the gift of the Holy Spirit. We can well imagine that when the service was over this devoted couple asked for an interview with the brilliant orator. From the lips of these humble tentmakers, Apollos learned for the first time the story of Jesus and His love. It is to the credit of Apollos that he accepted at once the message which came to him from Aquila and Priscilla. He saw that Jesus had fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament. Up to this time he had devoted his life to proclaiming the baptism of John. From this time on, the central purpose of his life was to convince the Jews from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

Apollos remained in Ephesus for a time. When he decided to go on a preaching mission to Greece, the brethren in Ephesus gave him letters commending him to the Christians in Achaia. We do not know what other places he may have visited, but we do know that he went to Corinth. The church at Corinth had been founded by Paul, Timothy, and Silas. But these leaders were no longer there. Apollos had a useful ministry in Corinth. A little later we find Apollos meeting with Paul at Ephesus.[1] It was at this meeting that Paul sought in vain to persuade Apollos to return with the brethren to Corinth. Our last glimpse of Apollos in the New Testament record is a reference to him

about ten years later in Paul's letter to Titus. Here we find Paul urging Titus to help Zenas, the lawyer, and Apollos on their journey and to see to it that "nothing be wanting unto them."

Luther ascribed the letter to the Hebrews to Apollos. While this cannot be proved, the letter fits in with what we know of Apollos.

Apollos and Paul were both strong, independent personalities. It was inevitable that in time these two strong men should clash. We have a record of such a disagreement in Paul's reference to Apollos in First Corinthians, chapter sixteen, verse twelve. Paul writes to the Corinthians: "As touching our brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren: but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time." It is not difficult to re-create this scene. When Apollos came to Paul in Ephesus, Paul sought to persuade him to go with the brethren to Corinth. But Apollos was not ready at this time to go to Corinth, and he let Paul know that he would go to Corinth at his convenience and not before. Apollos was running his own life and he was not taking orders from Paul. The possibility of a division in the church centering around the personalities of Paul and Apollos is revealed in the early chapters of First Corinthians. Reports had come to Paul that the ugly head of party spirit had been revealed in the church at Corinth. Paul writes to the Corinthians: "It hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ."[2]

It is to the credit of Paul and Apollos that they did not personally endorse the party spirit which had appeared at Corinth. Paul does not rush to the defense of his own party. He seeks instead to preserve the unity of the church by laying hold of the essential unity between him and Apollos—a unity which was far more important than their minor differences. Paul's solution of this problem is important, as every church faces the task of building its strong and independent personalities into a team in which men work together for the building of the Kingdom of God.

Paul realized that both he and Apollos were to be understood as laborers for Christ. He thinks of the church in Corinth as a field in which men must work or as a building which must be erected. But in either case it is God's field or God's building. He and Apollos are laborers whom God has sent to do His work. When Paul says: "We are labourers *together* with God," the word "together" describes Paul's relation to Apollos, not his relation to God. It is true that Paul felt himself in harmony with the divine purpose for the world. He was working for God. His life was lived out in obedience to the heavenly vision. But Paul's sense of the chasm between God and man is such that he would hardly have said that he and God were working together. The Revised Standard Version translates this sentence: "For we are *fellow workmen* for God." It has caught the meaning of the Greek original. Paul was a workman for Christ. Apollos was a workman for Christ. The same Lord had sent each of them to the task of building His Church. They were bound together by the fact that the same Lord was working through both of them.

Paul realized that the final significance of the work of every man is in the way in which God honors his work. Neither he nor Apollos had any significance beyond that of being ministers of the Lord through whom men had believed. He had been the first to sow the seeds of the Gospel in Corinth. But his work had permanent significance only as God honored his human words and made them the medium of the divine word spoken to the human heart. The ministry of Paul had been followed in Corinth by the ministry of Apollos. Apollos was a great orator. An orator can draw a crowd, but only a true servant of the Lord can build a Christian congregation. Apollos was a great scholar. He was "mighty in the Scriptures." But scholarship—even Biblical scholarship—is futile unless the Lord blesses our scholarship to the building of His Church. Apollos was a great debater. He mightily convinced the Jews, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. But here again he was dependent entirely for his success on the blessing of God on his labors. In the complete dependence of both Paul and Apollos on their common Lord, there was a bond of unity between these men which could not be broken.

DEMETRIUS 19

"A certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen."—Acts 19:24

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 19:21-41

Demetrius was a silversmith. He lived and worked in the great city of Ephesus about the middle of the first century. Demetrius was a leading figure among the silversmiths of Asia. In a similar situation today he would have been the head of the craftsmen's union of silversmiths. The center of the life of the city of Ephesus was the worship of the Ephesian Diana. There is nothing in common between this Oriental goddess and the Diana of Greek and Roman mythology. Artemis, or Diana as she was called by the Romans, was the sister of Apollo. She was the goddess of chastity and virginal purity. She was also known as the goddess of the moon. Usually she is represented as a tall slender goddess with a bow in her hand and a quiver of arrows on her back. Diana, the goddess of the hunt, and Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, are two of the noblest conceptions of Greek mythology. The Ephesian Diana was the goddess of fertility. She is usually represented as a many-breasted woman. She closely resembles the Ashtoreth of Canaanite mythology.

According to a legend, the image of Diana which was at Ephesus had fallen down from heaven. Some commentators think that this legend may go back to a meteor which fell at Ephesus. But the probability is that the legend was the invention of the priests. This Oriental goddess was worshiped at Ephesus in a temple that was rightly considered one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. It was a magnificent work of Ionic architecture. The building was more than one hundred yards in length

and seventy-five in width. It was supported by a hundred marble columns. The temple was adorned with works of art by the greatest of the Greek sculptors and painters.[1]

In spite of the surpassing wonder of her temple, the worship of the Ephesian Diana was a debasing cult which deified the worst lusts of men. The worship of fertility was probably associated with the "sacred prostitutes." This degraded worship was certain to have a corrupting influence on those who came to Ephesus to worship at this shrine.

Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen made their living making and selling silver images of the goddess and of her shrine. These images were more than souvenirs. They were idols that were to be worshiped in the homes of the people. The probability is that at times the conscience of Demetrius hurt him as he thought of the devastating effects on the morality of the people involved in the spread of this idolatry. But the idolatry which he served paid him well. As long as he was growing rich he would seek to avoid coming to terms with his conscience.

Demetrius was similar to many men today who are making money off of the service of the evil passions of men. The liquor interests know, for example, that an increase in the use of alcohol in the country as a whole will be accompanied by an increase in the number of broken homes. They know it will mean that more people become the slaves of alcohol. But if the traffic is the source of their wealth they can become blind to its moral implications. Commercialized prostitution and the various places for gambling are the attempts of men to grow rich through evil sources. There are many people who make their living in one way or another through some racket or some form of graft.

While Demetrius was busy growing rich through the service of this idolatry there came to Ephesus a great preacher who attacked with peculiar vehemence the idolatry which Demetrius was supporting. As a Jew, Paul had a deep-seated hatred of idolatry. He knew the second commandment, in which his people were forbidden to make graven images or to bow down to them. He knew that every idol was a misrepresentation of God. When he passed through Athens, the center of Greek culture, his soul

was deeply moved when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. In Ephesus he boldly maintained that there were no gods that were made with hands. He insisted that the Creator of heaven and earth was not to be worshiped in this way.

Paul did more than attack the idolatry of Ephesus. He proclaimed a Gospel in which there was the true answer to the human cravings which had found a perverted satisfaction in idolatry. Behind the besetting sin of idolatry we have the craving for a God who has come to us in the likeness of man. Paul proclaimed the supreme truth expressed in the words, "God . . . manifest in the flesh."[2] He revealed the God who comes to us in Jesus Christ. He insisted that the will and character of God had been revealed in the crucified and risen Lord. He called to all men to turn from the worship of idols to the worship of the true and the living God.

Demetrius must have gone to hear Paul preach. He may have felt in his own heart the yearning to break with the idolatry which he served and to give himself in full surrender to the God who has come to us in Jesus Christ. But the thing which made it impossible for Demetrius to accept the Gospel was his dependence for his living on the making and selling of idols. Demetrius could not at the same time give his heart to the Lord and make his living serving the Ephesian idolatry. Demetrius in this respect is typical of many other men who are unable to come to Christ because they make their living in the service of evil. If the bootlegger is to become a Christian he must find an honest method of making a living. Christians must properly be concerned with the sources of their wealth. The choice here is not always clear, as there are many occupations which are only in part a service of evil. And many of the great estates of the past have been built by fraud and exploitation. But there are some occupations which are so clearly involved in the service of evil that those who follow them must break with their past if they are to become a part of the Christian community. The sin of Demetrius was not that he was a silversmith. If he had had the courage to try, he could undoubtedly have found employment for his talents in some method of working with silver which did

not serve an idolatry. But there was no place in the Christian Church for Demetrius if he was determined to continue to make and sell images of Diana of the Ephesians.

At first, it was his devotion to an idolatry which kept Demetrius from becoming a Christian. But in time Christianity came into open conflict with the Ephesian idolatry. Under the preaching of Paul, Christianity became a mass movement in Ephesus and in the surrounding cities of Asia. The Christians attacked all idolatry as a false and degrading worship of the true God. Soon the effect of this preaching began to be seen in the decrease in the sale of the silver images of Diana. As Christianity continued to spread, this falling off in the sale of images struck at the major source of the income of Demetrius and the silver craftsmen of Ephesus. This led Demetrius into open conflict with Paul and the Christian Church. He determined if possible to kill Paul and to destroy the Christian movement. The mob demonstration which he staged was skillfully managed. The real reason for the mob was his statement to the craftsmen, "Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth." We can always expect a violent reaction when Christianity touches effectively the evil sources of men's wealth. But Demetrius was too smart to let his real motives be known to the mob. To the people, his appeal was to religious prejudice. He led through the streets of Ephesus a noisy mob shouting, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." He insisted that the Christians were attacking the cult which gave the city its wealth and prestige.

Demetrius was nearer right than he meant to be. Christianity could never have compromised with the worship of the Ephesian Diana. The acceptance of Christianity by the people of Ephesus would have meant in the end the desertion of the shrine of Diana and the destruction of all those business interests which were centered in the pre-eminence of Ephesus as the site of the great temple to Diana. The proclamation of the Gospel must in the end involve the destruction of idolatry. The acceptance of Jesus as Lord must cut at all the evil sources of men's wealth.

Demetrius is a symbol of all those who oppose Christianity because the Christian message strikes at the evil sources of their

wealth. He represents the powers of entrenched evil as they marshal themselves together against the Lord and His Christ. But Demetrius failed. The Kingdom of God goes on, and men like Demetrius cannot stop it. He did not break the will of God but he did break himself upon it. He sold himself to an idolatry to work evil for the sake of material gain. In so doing he missed his chance to lay hold of eternal life. We must ask of him as of others, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"[8]

AGABUS 20

"There came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus."—Acts 21:10
"Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify [to] the gospel of the grace of God."—Acts 20:24

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 11:27-30; 20:17-38; 21:8-14; I Corinthians 12:10, 28-29

One of the most interesting of the many developments of Christianity in the New Testament period is the appearance of a group of Christian prophets. In listing the gifts of the Spirit in the Corinthian church Paul says: "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; *to another prophecy.*"[1] In verses 28 and 29 of the same chapter he says: "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, *secondarily prophets,* thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all *prophets?* are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?" And in I Corinthians, chapter thirteen, verse two, he writes: "And though I have *the gift of prophecy,* and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge." It would seem that Paul considers the prophets as second only to the apostles in their significance in the Christian community.

The appearance of prophecy in the New Testament is always closely connected with the working of the Holy Spirit. Prophecy is the utterance of Christian men under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Prophecy both in the Old Testament and in the New is never merely the predicting of coming events. The prophets were characterized by moral and spiritual insight. They knew the character of God as revealed in Christ and they knew the hearts of men. Their predictions arose in part out of the profound

understanding of the contemporary scene which was given to men who saw all of the life of man as it was revealed in the light of God. But the note of prediction which we have in the Old Testament prophets was present also in New Testament prophecy. Through men chosen by Him, God revealed enough of the future to give the church guidance which she needed for tasks in the present.

One of the best known of the New Testament prophets was a man named Agabus. He was a Jewish Christian who made his home in Jerusalem. About the year A. D. 48, Agabus and some Christian prophets from Jerusalem made a visit to the rapidly growing church at Antioch. While he was there, he prophesied by the Spirit that there would be a great famine throughout all the world. Luke says that this famine came during the days of Claudius Caesar. Guided by this prediction, the Christians at Antioch determined to send relief to the brethren who dwelt at Jerusalem. We have therefore as an outgrowth of this prophecy the first organized effort of one Christian community to express Christian brotherhood by sending relief to Christians in an area where it was felt that destitution would be peculiarly acute. It was as the bearer of this offering to Jerusalem that Paul made his first visit to this city after his flight from Jerusalem shortly after his conversion. The example of this church at Antioch should stimulate Christians to increased benevolence at a time when Christians in various sections of the world are certain to be in need.

The second appearance of Agabus came about ten years later. Paul at the time was on his way to Jerusalem but was stopping for a visit in Caesarea at the home of Philip the Evangelist. It is interesting to get this little glimpse of Philip, who has not appeared in the New Testament narrative since his carrying of the Gospel to Samaria and his preaching to the eunuch of Ethiopia. About twenty-five years have passed since these events, and Philip is now settled in his home in Caesarea with four unmarried daughters who also prophesied. This visit of Paul with Philip the Evangelist is an interesting illustration of the way in which Paul in one way or another comes into contact with

most of the significant figures of New Testament Christianity. Agabus the prophet comes to the home of Philip the Evangelist. At a meeting in which both the companions of Paul and the Christians of Caesarea are represented, Agabus sets forth in dramatic fashion his prediction concerning the consequences of Paul's visit to Jerusalem. He takes Paul's girdle, binds his own hands and feet with it, and says: "Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles."[2] The prediction of Agabus was not different from other warnings which had come to Paul. When Paul had stopped at Tyre just before coming to Caesarea, the Christians there had "said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem."[3] And in Paul's speech to the Ephesian elders at Miletus he said: "And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me."[4]

When Agabus had delivered his prophecy, Paul's companions in travel and the Christians at Caesarea joined in beseeching him not to go up to Jerusalem. But Paul replied, "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."[5] Alongside this statement we need to set his words to the Ephesian elders. After mentioning the bonds and afflictions which according to the witness of the Holy Spirit in every city he knew to be awaiting him at Jerusalem he says: "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."[6]

Paul's determination to go to Jerusalem was not mere stubbornness. He went bound in the Spirit. He moved on to Jerusalem even as his Master before him had set His face like flint to go to Jerusalem. In both cases, it was obedience to the understanding of the will of God. Paul was again the bearer of the offerings of the Gentiles to the brethren at Jerusalem.[7] But this time he brought the gifts of the whole Gentile Church. He

brought them in the hope that he might mediate between the Gentile and Jewish wings of the Church and preserve the unity of a Church that was threatened with schism. The warnings of the Spirit through Christian prophets like Agabus were not to prevent him from going up to Jerusalem but to reveal to him the things he was yet to suffer for the name of the Lord Jesus. Here was a man who could walk unflinchingly in the path of duty in spite of the attacks of his enemies and the pleadings of his friends. It is most difficult to choose the course which we feel to be the will of God for us when our friends, concerned for our own safety, are pleading with us to turn aside.

The prophecy of Agabus gives the setting for the revelation of the controlling purpose of Paul's life. He is willing to suffer prison or death for the name of the Lord Jesus. He is not deeply concerned for his personal safety. His one desire is to finish with satisfaction to himself the course which has been set for him by his Lord and to accomplish the ministry which he has received of the Lord Jesus. He sums up the whole purpose of his life when he describes this ministry as the obligation to testify to the good news of the grace of God.[8] Paul stands among those who must bear witness to the infinite grace of God which came to us in Jesus Christ.

The trouble with our time is that so few professing Christians have been laid hold of by a faith that is worth living for, a faith for which they if necessary are willing to suffer prison and death. The prevailing philosophy of today seems to be that no beliefs are important enough to cause us serious inconvenience. But a secular humanism which has ceased to believe anything passionately can never stand against the onslaught of the modern idolatries in which men are willing to suffer and die to bring about their kind of world revolution.

The outstanding thing about Paul and the men whom he gathered around him was that they were committed men. Their eyes had seen the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. They were heralds of the good news of the grace of God. They were witnesses of the resurrection. They pointed dying men to the resurrection world of God. These men were laid hold of by a

sense of destiny. They had a course to run. They had received a ministry from the Lord Jesus. Their one concern was that they should not be disobedient to their heavenly vision. Such men were invincible because they were the men through whom the risen Lord was accomplishing His purpose in their world.

ANANIAS 21

". . . the high priest Ananias."—Acts 23:2
"God shall smite thee, thou whited wall."—Acts 23:3

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 22:30—23:15; 24:1

There are three men named Ananias in the New Testament. An Ananias and his wife Sapphira figure in the fifth chapter of Acts as the couple who sought to get credit for giving all of their property when they were holding back part of the purchase price. Paul was baptized by Ananias of Damascus, a devout Christian of Jewish background who was one of the leaders of the church in his city. The Ananias with whom we are concerned now was high priest at the time that Paul was arrested. In the list of the high priests, he is known as Ananias, the son of Nebedeus. He was appointed high priest by Herod, king of Chalcis, about A. D. 48. In the year A. D. 52 he was sent in bonds to Rome by the governor of Syria to answer for violence done by the Jews to the Samaritans. He must have been cleared of this charge as he is still high priest when Paul is arrested in Jerusalem in the year A. D. 58. Deposed by Agrippa in A. D. 59, he was assassinated in A. D. 67.[1]

The office of the high priest was the highest religious office in Judaism. The office went back to Aaron. It had been held by men who were among the spiritual leaders of Israel. The high priest was the mediator between God and the people. It was his prerogative to go once a year into the Holy of Holies and there to make atonement for his people. The people thought of him as God's representative on earth very much in the same way that a devout Catholic today thinks of the Pope. After the restoration, the office of the high priest became increasingly a political as well as a religious office. In matters that concerned their religion, the

high priest had authority over all Jews. Paul received from the high priest letters which gave him authority to arrest Christian Jews in Damascus and to bring them bound to Jerusalem for trial.

The office of the high priest, as every office of this kind, was at times held by unworthy men. Caiaphas who presided as high priest when Christ was tried is a good example of a designing ecclesiastic without moral scruples who held the highest office in the religion of Judaism. But in spite of the character of the men who held it, the Jews reverenced the office very much as the English people have a respect for the throne which runs much deeper than the personal character of the man who is actually king.

The record of secular history tells us little of the character of this Ananias. The account of Luke is more revealing. We learn from him that after the trial before the high priest broke up in disorder, a band of more than forty men bound themselves under oath that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. Their plan of procedure was to ask the chief priests to request that Paul be brought again to the judgment hall. The conspirators planned to lie in wait, to overwhelm the guard, and to kill Paul. Evidently Ananias was willing to co-operate with these murderers. Having failed to get a sentence of death against Paul, he was willing to work with a lynching party. The spectacle of a religious leader seeking to gain his ends by assassination is enough to enable us to form our own opinion of the moral character of Ananias. We must distinguish between the office and the man, but it is hard to feel right about the office of the high priest when it is held by a man like Ananias.

There is no reason to think that Ananias had any direct part in the attack on Paul which had been made by the Jerusalem mob. The mob was incited by certain Jews of Asia who recognized Paul in the Temple. But the day after the rescue of Paul from the mob, Ananias receives a summons from Claudius Lysias ordering him to call a meeting of the Sanhedrin.[2] Claudius Lysias understands that the charges against Paul move in the realm of his relation to the law of the Jews. When the Sanhedrin is assembled, he brings Paul down and sets him before them. This highest court of Judaism is made up of Sadducees and Pharisees. The

Roman soldiers stand around to preserve order and protect the prisoner. But the trial is before the council with Ananias presiding. The Apostle of Christ to the Gentiles must give an account of himself before the highest court of his people.

Paul begins with the statement, "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."[3] The statement needs to be seen in the light of our knowledge of his life as a whole. Paul as a Christian felt deeply his sin in persecuting the early Church. There were times when he thought of himself as the chief of sinners. But Paul is on trial now not on the basis of his record as a persecutor of Christianity but because of his defection from Judaism and particularly because of his offering of the privileges of the Jews to the Gentiles in the name of Christ. It is with his record as a Christian in mind that Paul declares that he has lived in all good conscience before God.

This statement of Paul's is too much for Ananias. He faces the chief apostate from Judaism who boldly declares in the presence of the highest court of the Jews that he has lived in all good conscience before God. Ananias commands those who stand near to Paul to smite him on the mouth.

In quick reply to this word of Ananias, Paul says to him, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?"[4] When Paul has said this, those who stood by say to him, "Revilest thou God's high priest?" Paul answers, "I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people."[5] There is some difficulty in understanding this reply of Paul's. It is possible that he did not know Ananias was the high priest. But normally the high priest would be revealed by his robes. And Paul's words are based on his knowledge that Ananias is acting as the judge of the law. Probably the expression is best understood in the sense that Paul admits that he forgot for a moment that Ananias was high priest. In the heat of indignation, he spoke to him as man speaks to man. Jesus in a similar situation was smitten by a soldier who said, "Answerest thou the high priest so?" Jesus with majestic composure replied, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness

of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?"[6] We can hardly expect Paul to have the self-control of Jesus.

Paul condemns the high priest because while in the act of being a judge of the law he commands a prisoner to be smitten contrary to the law. The law permitted no man to be punished until he had had a chance to speak for himself.[7] Paul brands Ananias as a "whited wall." The reference is to the whitewashed stones at the mouth of the sepulchres. Jesus used the same figure of speech in revealing the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees.[8]

Paul pronounces a curse on Ananias when he says: "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall." This is not profanity. It is cursing, but it is serious cursing. It is the word of an apostle of Christ to the religious leader of Judaism. There are no details to the curse. We have simply Paul's statement that the God whose representative on earth Ananias claims to be will judge him for the hypocrisy of his life. It is the word of an apostle to a designing ecclesiastic who is a disgrace to his office.

There is no excuse here for profanity. There are branches of the Christian Church which claim that the power to bless involves also the right to curse. There is such a thing as cursing which is not profanity. Consider, for example, Paul's words to Elymas.[9] The prophets of ancient Israel pronounced their curses in the name of the Lord.[10] But the very fact that there may be a serious cursing which is not profane should deter any man from calling down on others judgments which are an expression of his own wrath and not the righteous will of God.

Most of us would hesitate to play the role of prophet or apostle and pronounce the judgment of God on the evil around us. But this we have a right to do. We can remind every man that he stands before the judgment bar of God. We can warn him that a righteous God does not permit His laws to be violated with impunity. All men need to hear this word. There is no man who needs to hear it more than the ecclesiastic who is in an official sense the representative of God on earth. The word of Paul the apostle of Christ to Ananias the high priest of the Jews is a word that needs to be heard by all religious leaders who are tempted to live in a way that is unworthy of their high office.

FELIX 22

"And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."—Acts 24:25

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 23:24—24:27

Felix, the procurator of Judea, was a freedman of the emperor, Claudius. He had a brother, Pallas, who was a great man with the emperor, and Felix probably owed his high position, in part at least, to the influence of his brother. He was a cruel tyrant who, according to Tacitus, "exercised the power of a king in the spirit of a slave."[1] There are at least three incidents in his career as we find it sketched in the secular history of the time which reveal his character as a ruler. Josephus accused him of encouraging the assassins who murdered the high priest, Jonathan. Later Felix attacked these robber bands and crucified some of their leaders. On another occasion, false prophets arose and led a number of people into the wilderness. Felix, suspecting a revolt, had his soldiers attack these people. Later there appeared a false prophet who was an Egyptian. He led a company of people to the Mount of Olives where they assembled to wait for the walls of Jerusalem to fall down so they could enter the city. The spectacle of these people gathered together on the mountain and waiting for the walls of the city to collapse would seem impossible if we did not have in our own time similar companies who have assembled to be ready for the Lord on His return. Felix sent his soldiers against these misguided enthusiasts. Many of them were killed, but their leader escaped. This was about A. D. 55. When the chief captain, Claudius Lysias, rescued Paul from the Jerusalem mob, he thought that Paul was the Egyptian back again to cause trouble.[2]

Felix was married to Drusilla, a daughter of Herod the king (Herod Agrippa I) and sister to Bernice and Herod Agrippa II. Drusilla was known for her beauty. In marrying Felix she married outside of her faith, as she was a Jewess. The life of Drusilla would seem to indicate that her faith did not mean much to her. But this marriage of the Roman governor to a daughter of the Herods probably meant that before his meeting with Paul, Felix had received from her some knowledge of Jewish history and of the Jewish faith concerning God.[3]

One day when Felix was in the palace at Caesarea, there rode into the courtyard a company of seventy horsemen, which had come from Claudius Lysias, the chief captain at Jerusalem. They brought with them a prisoner, Paul, and a letter from the chief captain in which he stated that he had rescued the prisoner from a Jerusalem mob. He himself had found in him nothing worthy of bonds or of death, but as he had been informed of a plot against the life of the prisoner he had sent him under a strong guard to Caesarea and had ordered his accusers to appear before the governor.

Five days later, Felix sat in the judgment seat and heard the accusations against Paul as they were presented by the high priest, Ananias, by a lawyer named Tertullus, and by others. They accused Paul of being a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition among all the Jews, a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarines, and a defiler of the Temple. In his reply, Paul denied the other charges, but freely confessed that after the way which the Jews called heresy he worshiped the God of his fathers. He asserted that he had hope toward God of a resurrection of the dead, both the just and the unjust. He insisted that he had a conscience void of offense toward God and man. Felix refused to give a decision. He postponed the trial on the pretext of waiting for the coming of Claudius Lysias.

When the trial was over Felix found himself deeply interested in the religious faith of this man, Paul. A few days later he arranged for Paul to come before him and his wife Drusilla and explain to them the meaning of the Christian faith. The Gentile governor gave to the great Apostle to the Gentiles an oppor-

tunity to talk to him of the Christian faith. Many years before it had been said of Paul that he was a chosen vessel to bear the name of Jesus before the Gentiles, and kings.[4] Paul did not intend to miss this opportunity of witnessing to Felix, the Roman governor of Judea.

To Felix and his wife Drusilla, Paul preached a sermon. The sermon had three parts. He reasoned of righteousness, of temperance, and of judgment to come. He spoke first of righteousness. We do not have his sermon, but we know enough of his ideas to suggest his line of thought. He probably began with that sense of right and wrong which is present in some form in every human heart. He moved from this to the great conception of the righteousness of God. He told Felix that on the throne of the universe there was a just and righteous God who demanded justice of men whom He had created in His own image. The idea of the righteousness of God is on the whole a comforting conception. Because the psalmist believes that the Lord is good, he is confident that His mercy will endure forever.[5] But a part of the righteousness of God is His wrath against sin. Paul revealed to Felix a God who is eternally hostile to unrighteousness. The idea of a righteous God to whom he must give an account for his every deed is not a comforting thought to a man who has lived the life of a cruel and unjust tyrant. We can be sure that Paul did not talk of righteousness to Felix without telling him of the righteousness which is by faith. He told Felix of the Gospel of Christ as the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believed. He told Felix of the righteousness which God had wrought out in Jesus Christ and had made available to everyone who would receive it.

Paul's second point dealt with "temperance." Probably the root idea here is self-control or human responsibility. Paul talked to Felix and Drusilla about the responsibility of every man before God. As he preached, Felix could look back over his life and feel a sense of guilt for the way in which he through his actions had violated a moral order which grounds in God. He saw his cruel and tyrannical acts in a new light. Neither Felix

nor Drusilla could be very comfortable when Paul was talking of justice, of righteousness, and of their responsibility for their evil deeds. But here again Paul would not stop with talking in general terms. He was a witness to Jesus Christ. He confronted these two with the Christ and with His demands on their life. He pointed out to them the sin of rejecting the redemption which God had wrought out in Jesus Christ.

Paul's third point dealt with judgment to come. He must have pointed out to Felix and Drusilla the way in which God's moral order is an expression of His righteous will. He must have argued that God could not be the God of the universe and allow His moral order to be violated with impunity. He must have showed Felix the way in which men in this life receive in themselves the consequences of their sins. Inevitably he moved on to the larger theme of judgment in the world to come. He called upon these two to face a decision within their earthly life that would be eternal in its consequences. He warned them of the wrath to come.

As Paul preached, the Spirit of God brought conviction to the heart of Felix. As Paul looked upon Felix, he saw the face of the governor grow pale. His hands trembled. His knees smote together. Felix was under conviction of sin. Conviction should lead to repentance, faith, and new obedience. But Felix was not ready to make the great surrender that would have been involved in becoming a Christian. He sought a way of escape and he found it in the time-honored way of procrastination. He said to Paul, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."[6] It is a dangerous thing for a man who is under deep sense of guilt to trifle with the Spirit of God.

Felix kept Paul as his prisoner for two years. He sent for him and communed with him often. But the convenient season never came. The time for a man to respond is when God sends conviction. And God does not always come to us at our convenience. Felix hardened in his attitude toward Paul. He knew that his prisoner was innocent of deeds that were worthy of imprisonment or death. But he kept Paul in prison in the hope that Paul or his friends would pay him a bribe. And when Felix gave up

his office he left a man whom he knew to be innocent bound because he wanted to show the Jews a favor.

Felix must always stand before us as the man who through the preaching of Paul came to conviction of sin but avoided the necessity for decision by waiting for a more convenient time that never came. He no longer trembled when Paul preached. He had lost his sense of conviction of sin and with it his chance to know Him whom to know aright is life eternal.

PORCIUS FESTUS 23

"Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad."
"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness."—Acts 26:24-25

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 24:27—26:32

Porcius Festus succeeded Felix as governor of Judea in A. D. 60. Jesus had been crucified in A. D. 30. The Council of Jerusalem was held in A. D. 50. Paul stood before Festus in A. D. 60. At that time Festus had only two years to live, and the state which he came to govern had ten years to live. In A. D. 70 the Jewish state was destroyed by Titus.

When Festus arrived in Palestine, he spent three days in Caesarea, the port of entry and the political capital of the country, and then went up to Jerusalem, the religious center of the nation. Shortly after he reached Jerusalem, he was met by a delegation of the chief priests who informed him concerning a notable prisoner left by Felix at Caesarea. They identified him as Paul of Tarsus. They told Festus that this Paul was a dangerous mover of sedition. They requested that Festus as a favor to them should without further investigation give a sentence of death against Paul. It is to the credit of Festus that he replied to this suggestion with the noble words: "It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him."[1] As we read these words we wonder just how much progress the world has made in nineteen hundred years. Festus gives expression to the right of every man to a fair trial. Today there are vast areas of the world in which men do not even have the right to face their accusers and to know the crimes that are laid against them.

As Festus refused to condemn a man he had not tried, the priests suggested that Paul be sent for at once and that the trial be held in Jerusalem before the return of the governor to Caesarea. The probability is that if Paul had been sent for in this manner, he would never have reached Jerusalem. The priests were quite capable of planning for an attack by assassins on the way. Fortunately Festus refused to send for Paul. He did promise to hold the trial as soon as he returned to Caesarea.

The trial that followed in Caesarea was a surprise to the Roman governor. He expected the Jews to bring against Paul charges of violence and sedition. Instead they accused him of violating the Temple and undermining the Jewish law. They insisted that he was dangerous to the Jewish state and to Rome. The strange part of the trial was that in it Festus perceived that the real issue between Paul and his opponents centered around a man called Jesus of Nazareth. This man had been crucified thirty years before, under his predecessor in office, Pontius Pilate. But Paul kept insisting that this Jesus was alive. And the chief priests thought that because of this insistence Paul should be put to death. In such garbled fashion Festus first heard the story of Him who was dead and is alive for evermore.

While he did not understand the case, Festus was sure that Paul had done nothing worthy either of death or of imprisonment. As a just judge, he should have released the prisoner. But Festus was slow in his first official act as governor of Judea to give a decision which would mean that in the beginning the leaders of the Jews would become his implacable enemies. As a favor to the Jews, he asked Paul if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem and there be judged concerning the things whereof he was accused. Paul knew, if Festus did not, that the probable outcome of such a trial would be that he would be delivered to the Jews. He decided therefore to exercise the right of a Roman citizen and to appeal his case to Caesar. Festus granted the appeal at once. It was his way out. It did not force him either to condemn an innocent man or to antagonize the leaders of the people he had come to govern.

But Festus soon realized that he faced another difficulty. When

he sent a prisoner to Caesar he had to certify to the emperor the charges that were laid against him. Festus did not know how to frame a charge against Paul that would have meaning to Nero. As Festus wrestled with this dilemma, he received a formal visit from Herod Agrippa. When some days of entertainment had passed, Festus told to Herod Agrippa the story of his prisoner. King Agrippa expressed at once the desire to hear Paul.

In the scene which follows, we need to understand clearly the purpose of Paul. He is not seeking to gain his freedom. As he has appealed to Caesar, he knows that this is not possible. He is not primarily speaking to Festus. The speech is directed to Herod Agrippa, the last of the Herods, and among the last of the kings of Judah. His hope is to win the king to the Christian faith. But as he talks to Herod Agrippa, Festus listens and the message searches the soul of Festus.

Paul begins with words of graceful tribute to King Agrippa. Then he tells the story of his life. He was a Jew. He belonged to the Pharisees, the strictest sect of the Jews. He shared the hopes and yearnings of the Jewish people. He tells also of his opposition to the early Christian movement. Then he tells again the story of the scene on the Damascus road when the living Christ appeared to him and identified Himself as Jesus of Nazareth. It was here that Paul had come to the firm conviction that the Jesus whom he had thought dead was alive and glorified. He tells of his commission to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles and of his loyalty to that commission.

As Paul spoke, the living Christ who had confronted him on the Damascus road spoke through the words of His apostle to the soul of Festus. Festus was under such conviction that he could stand it no longer. He cried out with a loud voice, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad."[2] It is easy to understand why Festus thought Paul was crazy. Paul was telling a story of a man who had been dead for thirty years. He was insisting that this man was alive, that he had seen Him and talked to Him. He was saying that through faith in this man it was possible for Festus to lay hold of life eternal. The story did not fit into the training of Festus as a Roman. He did

not believe in gods who came to earth in human form. He could not understand how God could suffer and die. He found it difficult to accept the story of the resurrection. It seemed even more impossible that he, a Roman, must look to this crucified Jew if he was to find forgiveness from sin and an inheritance among the sanctified. To Festus, this was the story of a man who was beside himself.

The reaction of Festus was typical of the reaction of the Greeks and Romans to the story of Paul. When Paul preached Christ crucified, his message was to the Greeks "foolishness." The same reaction is typical of the naturalist today. The story which Paul had to tell does not fit in with his experience of life. The philosopher finds it difficult to believe that the salvation of his immortal soul is dependent on truth that comes to him through an event in history which happened nineteen hundred years ago.

Over against the charge that he is crazy, Paul defends his sanity and says two things about his message. The first is that it is true. The second is that it makes sense. He says, "I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness."[3] He insists that his story is true. He has not invented it. It is not a cunningly devised fable or an old wives' tale. It is not a Greek myth. It happened. The Son of God was born of woman. He lived our life and suffered and died. He rose from the dead. Paul can list those who have talked with the risen Christ. He himself has seen the Lord and has heard His voice. The story is stranger than any fiction ever invented but it is true. It happened.

Paul insists that his words are words of soberness. They make sense. He did not arrive at his Gospel by exploring the depths of human reason. But the message which has come to him is a message which has meaning for human life. If there is a God who has created us in His own image, does it not make sense that He should come to us in the midst of our earthly life? If the God who made us loves us with an everlasting love, does it not make sense for Him to reveal that love to us through some great redemptive act?

In fact, Paul would insist not only that his Gospel makes sense

but also that apart from it life is without meaning. The Christ is both the glory of Israel and the light to lighten the Gentiles. He would have said with Browning that

> ". . . the acknowledgment of God in Christ
> Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee
> All questions in the earth and out of it."[4]

He would have insisted that apart from Christ, there is no answer to the problems of human life.

If the words of Paul are words of truth and soberness, then Festus is in the place of decision. He must believe and in so doing become a part of the believing Christian community. Or he must avoid decision by continuing to affirm that Paul is mad. The dilemma of Festus is the dilemma of every man who hears the story of Paul and must decide for or against the Christ whom Paul proclaims.

HEROD AGRIPPA 24

"Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."—Acts 26:28-29

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 25:13—26:32

In the King James Version, Herod Agrippa says to Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."[1] Because of this translation Herod Agrippa has been made the theme of countless sermons in which he is presented as the man who was almost converted. And the words "almost persuaded" have been lifted from their setting here to become part of the title of the moving hymn, "Almost Persuaded, Now to Believe," by P. P. Bliss.

But scholars have always been doubtful as to whether the language of the King James Version here was true to the original Greek. The American Standard Version translates the two verses as follows: "And Agrippa said unto Paul, With but little persuasion thou wouldst fain make me a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God, that whether with little or with much, not thou only, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these bonds." The Revised Standard Version translates: "And Agrippa said to Paul, 'In a short time you think to make me a Christian!' And Paul said, 'Whether short or long, I would to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am.' "

On the basis of these translations we cannot be certain that Agrippa was so deeply moved by Paul as to be "almost persuaded." He may have answered in sarcasm in which he made fun of Paul's audacity in hoping in so short a time to convert the king. The two views are not necessarily contradictory. It may be that the king used sarcasm to cover his real feelings.

When we follow Paul's testimony and see the effect of his preaching on Festus, we can hardly believe that Agrippa was completely unmoved by Paul's appeal. If we cannot be certain of the reaction of Agrippa, we can be sure of the purpose of Paul. In the defense of his life before Herod Agrippa, Paul had the opportunity of giving his witness to Jesus Christ before the last of the Herods and one of the last of the rulers of the Jewish state. His hope was that Agrippa and all that heard him might become "such as I am, except these bonds."

Herod Agrippa was the great-grandson of Herod the Great. The first contact of the Herods with the Christ was when Herod the Great became alarmed at the news of the birth of one who was to be the King of the Jews. It was as an expression of his own sense of fear and insecurity that he ordered the slaughter of the male children under two years old in Bethlehem.

The grandfather of Herod Agrippa was Aristobulus, son of Herod the Great by his wife the beautiful and chaste Mariamne I, a granddaughter of Hyrcanus. Through her, Herod Agrippa was directly descended from the Maccabeans. The father of Herod Agrippa was the Herod who is called in Acts, Herod the king. We have in the twelfth chapter of Acts the story of the attempt of this Herod to persecute the Christian Church. "He killed James the brother of John with the sword."[2] The probability is that this Herod had no clear understanding of the nature of Christianity and that his policy of persecution was carried out merely as one method of gaining favor with the Jews. He followed the execution of James with the arrest of Peter. Luke tells for us the story of the miraculous deliverance of Peter. He follows this account with the story of the sudden death of Herod in Caesarea, and he concludes his story with the comment: "and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost. But the word of God grew and multiplied."[3] This was the fate of the father of Herod Agrippa.

Young Herod Agrippa was seventeen years old when his father died in A. D. 44. He was studying in Rome at the time, but he must have known some of the details of his father's death. We do not know whether he saw any connection between

the death of his father and his role as persecutor of the Christian Church. Later he was appointed king of Chalcis, a tiny principality on the west slope of Lebanon. His dominions were gradually enlarged until at this time he ruled over a considerable portion of Palestine. When Paul appeared before him in A. D. 60, he had been a governor of the Jews for at least ten years. Festus died in A. D. 62, but Herod Agrippa remained in Palestine until the time of the Judean wars. After the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70 he went to Rome. His death did not come until A. D. 100.[4]

Herod Agrippa had two sisters, both of whom are mentioned in Scripture. His youngest sister was Drusilla. She married the Roman governor Felix and was with him when Paul reasoned before him of righteousness, justice, and judgment to come. Two events in the life of Drusilla reveal the extent to which the Herods considered themselves Jews. When she was very young she was promised in marriage to a man named Epiphanes, the son of Antiochus, king of Commagene. The condition of the marriage was that the bridegroom should accept Judaism. When he finally refused to do this, the proposed marriage was called off. Later when Drusilla married Felix who was a Roman and an idolater she was condemned by her own people. The Herods were from Edom. They were never accepted by the Jews as truly belonging to the family of Israel. But they had embraced Judaism, and the Romans considered them native princes.

Herod Agrippa had another sister named Bernice. She was with him when he paid the visit of state to Festus at Caesarea a few weeks after Festus had assumed the duties of his office. Bernice was not as beautiful as her younger sister Drusilla but she must have had a way with men. In her checkered career she had already been married to two kings. Later she became the mistress first of Vespasian and then of Titus. She was seen so intimately with her brother Herod Agrippa that scandal arose concerning them. The woman whom Paul faced that day was to have in her life history three kings and two of the men destined to be emperors of Rome. She was a woman who could have carried the Christian witness to the Caesars. But Luke gives no suggestion that Bernice was "almost persuaded."

When Paul stands before Herod Agrippa, the prophecy is fulfilled in which the Lord says of him: "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and *kings,* and the children of Israel."[5] This is Paul's one chance to give his testimony to Christ before a king of the Jews. In the great discourse which we have in the twenty-sixth chapter of Acts, Paul is not trying to win his freedom. He has appealed to Caesar and he knows that he must now be sent to Caesar. He hopes that his testimony will be used by the Spirit to bring conviction to all who hear him. But the speech of Paul is directed to Herod Agrippa. He seeks to win the king to obedience to the faith.

In the opening sentence, Paul pays a gracious tribute to Agrippa as one who was expert in all the customs of the Jews. He tells first the story of his early life. He was educated in Jerusalem. He belonged to the sect of the Pharisees. As a Jew he shared the Messianic hopes of his people. He tells also of his experience as the persecutor of the Church. Paul had sought by persecution to stamp out Christianity. He tells Herod of the experience which changed him from the hardened persecutor to the Apostle to the Gentiles. He says that the risen Lord had revealed Himself to him when he was on the road to Damascus. He tells the story of his obedience to the heavenly vision. He insists that the real cause of the opposition of the Jews to him is his witness to the risen Lord. He is confident that his message is the true fulfillment of the Messianic hope of his people.

It is at this point that Festus interrupts. Paul answers Festus but continues at once with his appeal to Herod Agrippa. He passes from personal testimony to Agrippa's knowledge of the events of history. Agrippa must have known the story of the life, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. He must have known the witness to the resurrection. From the appeal to history, Paul moves on to the appeal to Scripture. He proclaims to Herod Agrippa the Christ as the fulfillment of the hopes of the Jewish people as they had been expressed in the great prophets of Israel. He knows that in his heart Herod Agrippa believes the prophets.

As Paul talks he ceases to be the prisoner on trial. He speaks as the apostle of Christ to a sinning man who is in need of redemption. And as he speaks, Agrippa is set in the place of decision. If he had accepted the witness of Paul he might have laid hold of eternal life for himself and he might have led his people to recognize their Messiah. The history of the Jews might have been changed if the last of their kings had led them to the One who was both the light of the Gentiles and the glory of Israel. But Herod Agrippa missed his day of opportunity. He had his chance and he failed to take it. He went on to face life and death without the Christ who came to be the Saviour of sinners.

TITUS 25

"Whether any do enquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellow-helper concerning you."—II Corinthians 8:23

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
II Corinthians 2:13; 7:6-7, 13-15; 8:6, 16-17, 23; 12:18; Galatians 2:1, 3; II Timothy 4:10; Titus

Titus was the trusted friend and messenger of the Apostle Paul. He was one of that remarkable group of men whom Paul led to Christ and trained as the effective bearers of Christianity as it spread rapidly over the Roman Empire in the first century. Strangely enough, there is no mention of him in the narrative of Acts. The references to him in the letters of Paul are more or less incidental. Paul writes to him the brief Epistle which bears his name. But when we put together the various references there emerges the picture of a strong man who played an important part in the building of the New Testament church.

Titus was very close to Paul. In the letter to him, Paul calls him, "mine own son after the common faith."[1] This probably means that Titus was one of Paul's converts. It is certainly also the expression of a close personal relation. In commending Titus to the Corinthians, Paul describes him as "my partner and fellow-helper concerning you."[2] In this same letter, he tells us of his disappointment at failing to find Titus at Troas. He writes: "Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia."[3] He tells us in the seventh chapter of the joy which came to him when he found Titus. He says: "For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; with-

out were fightings, within were fears. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus."[4] Part of the comfort which Titus brought to Paul at this time was the good news of the development of the church at Corinth. But it is impossible for us to read these words without seeing in them a revelation of the love of Paul for Titus.

The first appearance of Titus in the story of the life of Paul is in connection with the visit of Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem which is described for us in the second chapter of Galatians. We cannot discuss here the question of whether or not this visit is to be identified with the meeting of the Jerusalem Council in A. D. 50. Whether we put the visit then or a little earlier, the significance of the events described in it is the same. Paul and Barnabas went up from Antioch to Jerusalem taking Titus with them. We can argue from this that Titus must have been associated with them in the work at Antioch. The purpose of this visit of Paul's was to lay his Gospel before the leaders of the Jerusalem church. But immediately after his arrival there arose an issue over Titus. By birth, Titus was a Greek. He had not received circumcision when he joined the Christian church. He had been received into the church on the sole condition of faith in Jesus Christ. Some of the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem demanded that Titus should be circumcised. Paul was not opposed to doing all that he could to avoid hurting the feelings of the Jewish Christians. A little later, on the second missionary journey, he was responsible for having Timothy circumcised out of consideration for the Jews. But Timothy was on his mother's side a Jew by birth. It was probably the desire of Eunice that her son should bear the seal of the covenant made with her people. Paul was convinced that in itself circumcision was of no importance. He could write to the Galatians: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."[5] If Eunice and the Jews wanted Timothy to be circumcised it was satisfactory to Paul on the principle of becoming all things to all men that he might by all means save some.[6]

But the demand for the circumcision of Titus moved on a

different plane. It was made by those who were saying, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved."[7] On this issue Paul had to make his stand. There is an abiding principle involved in Paul's example here. In our effort to win others we must seek to offend them as little as possible. Where principles are not involved we may accommodate ourselves to their prejudices. But when the truth of the Gospel is at stake we dare not compromise.

A period of nearly seven years passes before Titus appears again in the letters of Paul. During this period, the Gospel was planted by Paul in Greece, Macedonia, and Asia Minor. All of this group of references are found in II Corinthians. Paul had evidently written a letter to the Corinthians in which he severely rebuked them. He followed this letter with the sending to them of Titus. He instructed Titus to report to him on the condition of the church at Corinth. A little later Paul himself sailed for Troas. Evidently the plan had been for Titus on his return from Corinth to meet Paul at Troas. But Titus was delayed. Paul did not find him at Troas. He then pressed on into Macedonia. He was filled with joy when Titus came to him bringing good news of the church at Corinth. He reported that Paul's letter had been followed by real repentance on the part of the Corinthians. Paul's purpose as he writes is to send Titus back to Corinth to complete in Corinth the taking of the offering for the suffering saints at Jerusalem. The references in II Corinthians reveal Titus as having the heart of a true pastor. His experience in Corinth has filled him with a deep joy. He knows the joy of a true shepherd of souls as he finds his children walking in the truth. The joy of Titus lifts the heart of the apostle, who has been depressed both by fightings without and fears within. Paul feels that God has given to Titus a deep concern for the spiritual condition of the church at Corinth. In particular, God has used Titus to develop the Corinthians in the grace of Christian giving. The seventh and eighth chapters of II Corinthians are the most important of the writings of Paul on the theme of Christian stewardship. We can be sure that the approach which Paul outlines here was the approach of Titus as he went about

developing the churches in the grace of liberality. We could properly call Titus the first secretary of Christian stewardship. He was a man in whose heart God placed a great concern for the development of the giving of the church. He was Paul's minister in the arousing of the Gentile churches to the needs of the suffering saints at Jerusalem. It was on the part of Titus a labor of love. Titus, like Paul, refused to take even for his expenses any portion of the offering he did so much to raise.[8] When we remember the experience of Titus with these saints at Jerusalem seven years before, we appreciate all the more his concern for the need of the Jerusalem church.

A period of about eight years passes before we hear of Titus again. The letter to Titus was written about A. D. 65. Titus has been left in Crete to "set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city."[9] When we read Paul's estimate of the Cretans in chapter one, verses twelve and thirteen, of this Epistle we can appreciate the confidence he placed in Titus when he left him in Crete to put things in order and to organize the churches. From this point of view we should read the letter as a whole. It is filled with practical advice to a man who is busy with the task of administering the life of the church. Church officers are to be ordained. The Christians are to be instructed in their relation to each other and in their relation to the state. But it is not Paul's purpose for Titus to stay permanently in Crete. He is to plan to join Paul at Nicopolis, the place at which Paul expects to spend the winter.

Our last reference to Titus is found in the brief phrase in the last chapter of Second Timothy. It reads, "Titus unto Dalmatia."[10] At first glance this reference does not seem to tell us much. But when we remember that Paul in II Timothy is a condemned man whose friends have deserted him, the visit of Titus takes on more significance. Titus has made his way to Paul in Rome. He has probably risked imprisonment for the sake of a last visit to the man who has been his spiritual father for nearly two decades. And Paul has sent Titus on a mission to Dalmatia. This last mission of Titus is not without significance. Dalmatia is to be identified with the Albania of today. It was

then as now the abode of wild mountain tribes. By A. D. 67, Christianity is established in Rome and it is beginning to take root in such out-of-the-way places as Dalmatia. And the man who could set in order the turbulent Corinthians and the unruly Cretans is now being sent on a mission to Dalmatia. We do not know what he did there, but it is reasonable to suppose that Christianity in Dalmatia owed much to a Greek named Titus.

TYCHICUS 26

"Tychicus . . . a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord."—Colossians 4:7

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 20:4; Ephesians 6:21-22; Colossians 4:7; II Timothy 4:12; Titus 3:12

The power of a great leader to make his impact on his world is closely related to his ability to gather around him competent men whom he can prepare as instruments of his purpose in the world. Jesus recognized this in the calling and training of the twelve apostles. The great central purpose of the Apostle Paul was to win the Gentiles to obedience to the faith. Part of his tremendous power lay in the simple fact that he was a great man who was completely possessed by a mighty purpose. But Paul never worked alone. As men caught from him his great purpose they dedicated their lives to working with him and for him in the accomplishment of his purpose. As Christianity spread over the Roman Empire, Paul became the center of a group of men who were dedicated to the task of proclaiming the Gospel to the whole of the inhabited world. There are few men who have done more to shape the whole course of history than these men who worked with Paul to build the Gentile church.

Tychicus was an important member of this fellowship that gathered around Paul. In the latter years of his ministry Paul seems to have depended particularly on Timothy, Titus, and Tychicus as the men through whom he worked out his strategy for the conquest of his world for Christ. Of course Paul was not the only center of Christian activity in this critical period. We can be sure that each of the apostles carried on a program of missionary activity. But we know practically nothing of the work of these men, with the exception of Peter and John. Apollos

was closely associated with Paul, but Apollos seems always to have worked independently of Paul. He was never the messenger of Paul as Tychicus was.[1]

Tychicus is mentioned five times in the New Testament. The first of these is in Acts, chapter twenty, verse four. The other references are all from the letters of Paul. The setting of the reference in Acts is suggestive. Paul's ministry in Ephesus came to a close as the result of the mob led by Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen. He immediately left Ephesus to go to Macedonia. After visiting the churches of Macedonia he went on to Greece and remained there for three months. It was his purpose to go from Greece to Syria and on to Jerusalem bearing the offering of the Gentiles to the saints at Jerusalem. These plans were suddenly altered by the discovery of a plot on his life. Probably for reasons of personal safety he went back to Macedonia and then sailed to Troas. Luke pauses here to give a list of men who were to travel with him on his journey. He says: "And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, *Tychicus* and Trophimus. These going before tarried for us at Troas."[2] Lightfoot makes the suggestion that we have here the list of the men who were appointed by the churches to make the trip to Jerusalem with Paul and to be the actual bearers to the saints at Jerusalem of the offerings of the Gentiles.[3] This suggestion is in harmony with the way in which the men who are mentioned here are identified by their churches. It is strengthened a little later by the mention of Trophimus as being seen in Jerusalem with Paul and as being recognized by the Jews of Asia as from Ephesus.[4] It was the fear of the Jews that Paul had defiled the Temple by taking these Greeks into the inner courts of the Temple with him that was the immediate cause of the riot in which Paul was arrested in Jerusalem. The probability is that Tychicus was appointed by the churches of Asia as the representative along with Trophimus of these churches on the delegation to accompany Paul to Jerusalem. Such an appointment would reflect the confidence of the churches of Asia in Tychicus. If this is true, Tychicus was with Paul on this

important journey and was in Jerusalem when Paul was arrested. This was in A. D. 58.

Four years later Tychicus was present while Paul was a prisoner in Rome. At this time, Paul sent him on a very important mission. Paul had completed the letter which we know now as the letter to the Ephesians. It was probably a circular letter to all the churches of Asia. It would naturally go first to Ephesus as the most important church in this area, and in this way would be associated with this church. But the only personal reference in the whole of this letter is the commendation of Tychicus in chapter six of Ephesians, verse twenty-one. And this commendation is written in general terms that would be appropriate as a message to the Christians in any of the churches of Asia. This absence of all personal references is in such strong contrast to the usual custom of Paul that it can only be explained on the assumption that the letter was originally a circular letter. This is confirmed by the absence of the word Ephesus in some of the oldest manuscripts of this Epistle.

At the same time Paul sent by the hand of Tychicus the letter to the Colossians. A dangerous heresy had developed in Colossae. The peculiar situation there required a letter which dealt with the threat to the Christian faith involved in this heresy. If the reference to Tychicus in Ephesians, chapter six, verse twenty-one, is placed side by side with the reference to him in Colossians, chapter four, verse seven, it will be seen that there is an identity of language here which cannot be purely accidental. The relation of these two passages is part of a similarity of language in various sections of Ephesians and Colossians. The only satisfactory explanation of this is the assumption that the two letters were written at the same time. The close connection between the passages which refer to Tychicus in the two letters is a strong argument for Paul's authorship of Ephesians.

There is a human interest story in this mission of Tychicus. Onesimus accompanied him as he made his way back to Asia. And in addition to the letters we have mentioned, these two carried the letter to Philemon. Onesimus is referred to in Colossians as "a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you."[5]

Tychicus went with Onesimus to Colossae. He was known to the churches as an authorized delegate of Paul, and he must have helped to prepare the way for the return of Onesimus, the runaway slave, to his master, Philemon.

In addition to the bearing of these letters Tychicus was charged with the responsibility of informing the churches concerning Paul and his work. Paul says: "Now that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus . . . will tell you everything. I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are."[6] And to the Colossians he writes: "Tychicus will tell you all about my affairs."[7] The message of Tychicus to the churches would include, of course, information concerning Paul's health and his conditions of living. But it probably included much more than this. Through his messenger Paul was sharing with the churches his plans for the spread of the Gospel. In both references, he says that he is sending Tychicus "that he may encourage your hearts."[8] In commenting on the places in which the Greek word which is translated *encourage* is found in Paul's letters, Lightfoot says: "The prominent idea in all these passages is not comfort or consolation but *perseverance in the right way.*"[9] The sending of Tychicus on this mission was part of Paul's great purpose to keep in touch with the churches he had founded and to see that they persevered in the right way.

Tychicus is mentioned in Titus, chapter three, verse twelve. This letter was written during the period between the first and second imprisonments, when Paul was for a brief time a free man. At this time Paul is debating whether to send Artemas or Tychicus as his messenger to Titus when he is ready for Titus to join him at Nicopolis. In II Timothy, chapter four, verse twelve, we find that Tychicus has come to Paul during the second imprisonment when most of his friends were afraid to come near him. We find also that Paul has sent Tychicus on a mission to Ephesus. Paul refers to Tychicus four times, and each time he is Paul's messenger.

Paul calls Tychicus "a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord."[10] Each phrase is significant.

Tychicus was "a faithful minister . . . in the Lord." The expression as it is used here probably refers to the fidelity with which Tychicus carried out the missions entrusted to him by Paul. Tychicus saw that Paul was the key man in the carrying out of God's great purpose to bring the Gentiles into the Kingdom. He became Paul's messenger to the churches. During the closing years of his life Paul spent much of his time in prison. His impact on the church at large had to be made through his letters and through his messengers. He found in Tychicus a man he could trust as "a faithful minister . . . in the Lord." Paul says also that he and Tychicus are "fellow*servants* in the Lord." The Greek word here is the word for a "slave." Paul and Tychicus are bound together by the fact that they are both "slaves of Jesus Christ." Because both men look to Jesus as Lord and Master, they find themselves bound to each other in a fellowship which cannot be broken. Those who acknowledge Jesus as Lord are bound to Him and, through Him, to each other.

EPAPHRODITUS 27

"For the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me."—Philippians 2:30

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Philippians 2:25-30; 4:18

The church at Philippi was the first Christian church to be founded by Paul in Europe.[1] Throughout the whole of his ministry in Greece there continued a warm relation between the Apostle Paul and the Christians at Philippi. During the ministry of Paul at Thessalonica, the Philippians sent several times gifts to minister to his needs.[2] Later when Paul was at work in Corinth, his friends at Philippi followed him with their gifts.[3] The probability is that for a time they lost touch with the apostle, but later they heard that he was a prisoner at Rome. Naturally there was a desire on the part of these loyal friends to minister again to the aged apostle in his imprisonment. But Rome was a long distance from Philippi and it was not easy for the Christians to send gifts to Rome.

Epaphroditus was a trusted member of the Philippian church. Because he knew of the need of Paul, he volunteered to make the journey to Rome and to bear to Paul the gifts of the Christians at Philippi. He was sent out therefore by the church to perform a threefold ministry. He was to bear the greetings of the Philippian Christians to the apostle who had founded their church. These greetings included a report by Epaphroditus on the spiritual condition of the church. He was to deliver a gift of money that was designed to help Paul in his task of preaching the Gospel in Rome. And he was commissioned to remain in Rome and to minister in the name of the Philippian Christians to the personal needs of the apostle.

The coming of Epaphroditus meant much to Paul. The gift which he bore was part of the offering of the churches which made it possible for Paul while awaiting trial to live in his own hired house and to make that house the center of the Christian mission to Rome. The report which Epaphroditus gave to Paul of the condition of the church at Philippi is the background of the letter to the Philippians. Epaphroditus must have told Paul of the divisions in the church, of the way in which Euodias and Syntyche were not of the same mind in the Lord, and of the coming of the Judaizers to Philippi. But the personal ministry which Epaphroditus gave to Paul proved to be his best gift.

Paul describes him as "My brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier."[4] Paul found in this messenger of the Philippian church a true brother in Christ. The sense of Christian brotherhood was deepened when Epaphroditus plunged into the arduous labor of the laying of the foundations of the church in Rome. Great friendships are often incidental to a common commitment to a common task. Paul calls Epaphroditus a fellow soldier. The man from Philippi shared the toils and dangers of the Christians at Rome. Perhaps the most gracious tribute that Paul pays to Epaphroditus is his description of his sorrow when Epaphroditus was dangerously ill. Evidently Paul was bearing at the time some great sorrow. But he felt that if Epaphroditus had been taken he would have had sorrow upon sorrow.

And Epaphroditus did become seriously ill. The Greek expression which is translated "not regarding his life" literally means "having gambled with his life." According to Bishop Lightfoot, the same word is used a little later in church history to describe a group of Christians who called themselves "The Gamblers." These Christians would gamble with their lives by ministering in the name of Christ to the sick and dying in plague-infested areas. They did so in the full knowledge that they were risking their lives to carry on this ministry. But they were ready to risk disease and death in order that in Christ's name they might minister to the stricken people.[5]

This is the word that Paul uses when he writes to the Philippians that Epaphroditus *gambled* with his life to supply their

lack of service to him. In commenting on this phrase, Lightfoot says: "It seems plain from this expression that Epaphroditus's illness was the consequence not of persecution but of overexertion."[6] Epaphroditus lifted the load of the work of Christ in Rome. He worked to the limit of his strength and far beyond that limit. We do not know the details but we do not need to know them. We can supply them from our own imagination. He carried on in the name of his church a ministry to the needs of Paul. He exhausted himself in a ministry of teaching and preaching. The spiritual need of Rome was very great. And this man of God sought to do more than his strength would allow. In the end, his exhausted body gave way to some disease. He was sick, but the origin of his sickness was his overexertion.

While Epaphroditus was ill some messenger went from Rome to Philippi. He knew that his friends had heard of his illness. He was concerned because he knew his friends would be troubled about him. They had reason to be, for Paul suggests that Epaphroditus in his illness came to a crisis in which he drew near to death. We need only a little imagination to see the grim struggle with death which Paul and Epaphroditus fought as this man from Philippi lay at the point of death in a rented house in Rome.

Epaphroditus lived through the crisis. Paul saw in his recovery an answer to prayer. He says simply, "God had mercy on him"; and adds, "and not on him only, but on me also." As Epaphroditus entered the period of convalescence, he became homesick. Paul writes to the Philippians, "He longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick."[7] When Epaphroditus was well enough to make the journey, Paul decided to send him back to Philippi as the bearer of the letter which is known to us as the letter to the Philippians. We can be thankful that he made his journey in safety and that this priceless letter was delivered, preserved, and read in the churches.

Epaphroditus stands before us as a man who was ready to hazard even his life for the work of Christ. In the particular form in which he risked his life he reminds us of many who have

followed in his footsteps. We can be sure that he would if necessary have remained loyal even to death in time of persecution. But his was the more prosaic task of carrying the load of the work of the Christian mission in Rome until his strength gave way. He reminds us of missionary doctors who have ministered in the name of Christ to the suffering humanity around them until they were broken in health themselves. He reminds us of nurses who have waited on the sick until they were exhausted by their overexertion. He reminds us of devout pastors who have borne the spiritual load of the sin of their people until they have shortened their days in the exhaustion of their strength. He reminds us of Christian scholars who in fidelity to their tasks have gambled with their lives to bring to completion the tasks laid upon them.

Should Christians today follow the example of Epaphroditus? The answer is that in the normal circumstances of life Christians would be well advised to work to the limit of their strength but not beyond it. Every Christian needs to learn the conditions under which he can do his best work. The Christian needs to organize his life and discipline his powers. There should be a place in the rhythm of every life for rest and for recreation. The string of the bow cannot remain always tightened. The man who works wisely within the limits of his strength will in the end accomplish far more than the man who exhausts himself in a few years of intense labor.

But there are times when a man must be ready if necessary to sacrifice himself in the work of Christ. On the battlefield men are at times expendable. A few men are sent to hold a post which covers a retreat. The probability is that in the end they will all be killed, but in the meantime they will slow the march of the enemy and make possible the escape of their comrades.

If men are ready to hazard their lives on the field of battle for the service of their country, can we ask less of the man of God in the service of the Christ? The chaplain will risk his life to minister to his men in the day of combat. And there come times in the war of Christ with the forces of evil when the Christian soldier must be ready to stand in the breach even if in so

doing he risks his life. Paul was constantly risking his life in the service of Christ. We are reminded here of the words of Jesus: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."[8] Many a Christian worker who has been left without adequate help to hold a post that must be held can understand the choice that Epaphroditus faced in Rome. He was ready if necessary to gamble with his life that he might discharge the mission that had been laid upon him. For this reason we should "receive him . . . in the Lord with all gladness" and hold him in high regard.

PHILEMON 28

". . . our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer."—Philemon 1

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Philemon

Philemon was a wealthy citizen of the city of Colossae. There are several things in Paul's letter to him which at least suggest that he was a rich man. He owned a home in Colossae which was large enough for the church at Colossae to use as a meeting place. He opened his home to the Christian evangelists who came to Colossae, and the probability is that he supplied them with money for their journey. Philemon was rich enough to own slaves. The poor could not afford the luxury of having slaves to wait on them.

The probability is that Philemon became a Christian during the ministry of Paul at Ephesus. There is a reference in Colossians which seems to indicate that Paul had never been to Colossae.[1] From this it is reasonable to assume that Philemon came to Ephesus on a visit while Paul was carrying on his missionary activity there. Philemon and his wife, Apphia, and his son, Archippus, went to hear Paul preach. There they heard for the first time what is to us the old, old story of the Gospel. They learned that God had loved the world enough to send His only begotten Son to earth to be born of a woman, to live our life, to enter into the whole range of our human experiences, and to be put to death on a cross. They heard the witness to the resurrection. They learned that this Jesus was seated in glory and in power at the right hand of God. They heard the message of the forgiveness of sins as it was proclaimed on the basis of what God had done in Jesus Christ.

Philemon and his wife and son believed the message which was proclaimed by Paul. Through Paul, these three came to a saving knowledge of Jesus as Lord and Saviour.[2] The language which Paul uses concerning Philemon would indicate that Paul and Philemon worked together in the proclamation of the Gospel in Ephesus. We have also in Colossians a reference to Archippus in which Paul says: "And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it."[3] This would seem to indicate that Paul had ordained Archippus to the ministry.

The probability is that Philemon and his wife and son played a large part in the establishing of the church at Colossae. This church grew. In time, Paul left Ephesus. He made the trip to Jerusalem. He spent about two years in prison at Caesarea. He appealed his case to Caesar and was sent to Rome. In all, a period of perhaps four years passed. Paul and Philemon were separated but they remained bound together as brothers in Christ. Paul remembered Philemon constantly in his prayers and Philemon was praying for the release of Paul from prison. Paul was even hoping that on his next missionary journey he might visit the church at Colossae and stay in the home of Philemon.

It is against this background that we need to see Philemon as he receives the letter from Paul with regard to Onesimus. Paul prepares the way by a number of gracious tributes to Philemon. He comes to the heart of his letter when he says: "I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds . . . For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever; not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?"[4]

We do not know just how Philemon received Onesimus. But we can be sure that the letter to Philemon would never have been preserved and read in the churches if Onesimus had not been received in accordance with Paul's request.

It is easy to imagine Philemon on the night after Onesimus came back, as he sat alone with Paul's letter before him and tried to think through afresh the meaning of his Christian faith in its

bearing on his relation to Onesimus. When Onesimus became a Christian he found that in obedience to the will of his Lord and Saviour he had to do the hard thing, he had to go back to his master. Paul as a part of the demands of the Christian faith had asked a difficult thing of Onesimus. But if Christianity meant this to Onesimus the slave, what did it mean to Philemon the master?

Against the background of the insights of our modern life, we can say at once that Philemon should have set Onesimus free. Perhaps he did. Certainly, if he followed the insights of Paul concerning Onesimus, the master-slave relationship was so completely altered that it would in time be abandoned altogether. But slavery was the accepted form of the economic order in the ancient world. The profession of Christianity could not in the beginning be identified with the call to slaves to revolt or the call to masters to free their slaves. The task of Christianity was to move within the accepted form of the economic order until it radically altered it from within. Philemon the master had to learn that his Christian faith demanded of him a new attitude toward Onesimus.

This new attitude was in part made possible because of the change in Onesimus. The man who came back to Philemon was a very different person from the runaway slave who had departed with his master's goods. The light of spiritual victory was in the eyes of Onesimus. He was at peace with himself and at peace with his God. He had passed through great suffering and great decision to the re-creation of a broken personality. Spiritually he was equal if not superior to Philemon. The Onesimus who came back was a man who could be received as a brother beloved. The power of Christianity to transform Onesimus is part of its power to re-create the oppressed and downtrodden of the earth.

As Philemon thought through his relation to Onesimus he realized that Christianity involved inevitably the transformation of the whole master-servant relation. Onesimus stood before Philemon in the new human dignity which the Christian understanding of man gives to every human being. Philemon could

not mistreat Onesimus, because Onesimus was dear to the heart of Paul and it was through the preaching of Paul that Philemon had received the new birth that made him a Christian. But even deeper than the relation of Onesimus to Paul was the relation of Onesimus to Christ. Master and slave were bound together by the simple fact that they were brothers in Christ. This brotherhood affected them in the days of their flesh. But in the Lord it went beyond the days of their flesh. They were brothers forever in the Lord.

Philemon's relationship to Onesimus was controlled also by the simple fact that in his understanding of the Christian faith Philemon knew that he had a Master in heaven to whom he was responsible for his every act to Onesimus. It cannot be purely by accident that the two letters which were carried by the messenger of Paul to Ephesus and Colossae at the same time that he sent Onesimus back both have in them references to the attitude of the master to his servants. In Colossians he writes: "Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven."[5] And in Ephesians he writes: "And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him."[6]

The lesson which Philemon learned concerning the meaning of Christianity for him has to be learned over again in every generation. Those who employ domestic servants in the home need to see in the insights of the Christian faith the simple human dignity of the person who works as a servant in their home. The farmer needs to see his tenant in the new light which is born of the Christian faith.

Those who are employers of labor, whether it be in small groups or by thousands or hundreds of thousands, must remember that the laborer is more than a hand. He is more than a factor in the cost of production. He is a human being who is potentially at least a brother in Christ. He is a person whose soul is precious to the Christ who died both for the employer and for the employee. In Christ Jesus, the relationship of master and slave or of employer and employee is transcended. Employer

and employee are brothers in Christ both in the days of their flesh and ultimately in the eternity when they shall stand together before God.

The employer of labor is in a peculiar way responsible to his Master in heaven. There is no respect of persons when men stand before the judgment seat of Christ. The employer who has not rendered unto his employees that which is just and equal must remember that "he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons."[7] In obedience to the demands of the Christian faith, men like Philemon must completely rethink their attitude toward those who work for them. This is the demand of the Christian faith as interpreted by Paul.

ONESIMUS 29

"My son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds."—Philemon 10

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Philemon; Colossians 4:9

Paul's letter to Philemon was never written with the idea that it would be preserved as Scripture. But the letter is a revealing document, undoubtedly genuine, in which the figures of Paul, Philemon, and Onesimus stand out in bold relief. Onesimus was a slave. Slavery as a form of the economic order pervaded the whole of the ancient world. Even in the democracies of Greece, the free men were able to live a life of culture because they depended on slave labor. We do not know how Onesimus became a slave. He may have been born in slavery. He may have been sold into slavery as a result of the fortunes of war. We do know that he was a slave, that he was servant of a man named Philemon who lived in the city of Colossae in Asia Minor.

Onesimus was a *runaway* slave. Wherever slavery exists, the urge to escape from it appears and a whole system of enforcement has to be set up to keep the slaves in bondage. While it is not actually stated, the suggestion of Paul's letter is that Onesimus had not escaped empty-handed. He probably waited for a time when he had access to his master's purse. He took what he could and fled. From then on Onesimus was a fugitive. We do not know how he escaped from Colossae or how he finally made his way to Rome. We can be sure that he never forgot that he was a fugitive. He was never free from the fear that someone from Colossae would recognize him and report him to the authorities, who would arrest him and return him to his master.

In Rome, this runaway slave met Paul. Paul at the time was a prisoner. But he was not a condemned man. He was awaiting trial before Nero. While waiting for his trial to come up he was permitted to have his own hired house. He was always chained to a Roman soldier, but he was permitted to preach without fear, "no man forbidding him."[1] Paul, the prisoner, preached the Gospel to this runaway slave. From Paul, Onesimus heard the story of the life, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus. Perhaps Paul used to Onesimus the very words of Romans, "If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For man believes with his heart and so is justified, and he confesses with his lips and so is saved. The Scripture says, 'No one who believes in him will be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and bestows his riches upon all who call upon him. For, 'every one who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.' "[2] Onesimus believed the preaching of Paul. He put his faith in the Christ whom Paul preached. He became a Christian.

Onesimus became deeply attached to Paul. The suggestion of the letter is that he stayed in the same home with Paul and that he gave himself to a ministry to Paul. Of course he had to find work and earn his living. But the strength of his life he gave to the service of Paul. He had been Philemon's slave in the bondage of force. He became Paul's servant in the bondage of love. Paul calls him, "my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds." He writes to Philemon, "I am sending him back to you, sending my very heart."[3]

In Paul, Onesimus had found a friend, but he was not at peace. He was still a fugitive. He knew that there were things in his life he had not made right. One night he told the whole story of his life to Paul. He confessed that he was a runaway slave who had departed with his master's goods. To Paul's question, "Who is your master?" He replied, "A man named Philemon of Colossae." And Paul asked, "Had he a wife named Apphia, and a son named Archippus?" And Onesimus said, "Yes, but how did you know?" To which Paul replied, "I know the man

well. He came to Ephesus while I was preaching there. He also became a Christian. His son is pastor of the church at Colossae, and the church meets in his house." Rome was a great city, and Colossae was a long way off. But the master of Onesimus was the friend of Paul.

This discovery put Paul in the place of decision. What was his duty to Philemon and to Onesimus? Paul decided that Onesimus must go back to Philemon and make right the wrong that was in his past. This was a very hard decision because it meant for Onesimus the return to slavery. We should not seek to defend slavery because Paul sent Onesimus back. Slavery was the accepted form of the economic order in Paul's day. He must have loathed it for its violation of fundamental human rights. But he does not make a direct attack upon it. The letter to Philemon shows the way in which the spirit of Christianity as expressed in Paul was to undermine and ultimately to destroy the institution of slavery.

The important thing for us in Paul's sending Onesimus back is the way in which it reveals Paul's understanding of the demands of the Christian faith in the life of a man like Onesimus. Paul preached that men were saved by faith alone. But the way in which he dealt with Onesimus shows that he insisted that his converts go back into their past and make right in so far as possible the wrongs they had committed. The demand of Christianity in Paul's hands was not a simple and easy thing. The genuineness of repentance was shown in the willingness of the convert to make right—even at great cost to himself—the wrongs which he had done in the days before his conversion.

The guilty king in *Hamlet* tries to repent after Hamlet through the play has aroused his conscience. But the king is honest enough to know that he cannot pray for forgiveness while he is possessed of the things for which he committed his crime. While his crime is unconfessed, and he holds his crown and his brother's wife, any pretense of repentance is mockery.

This truth is obvious in our dealing with a great crime like murder. It is less obvious in many of the things that people seek to cover up as they go on in a fruitless effort to live the Christian

life without an effort to face seriously the sins of the past. John Wesley tells the story of a man who had made a very small contribution to a cause which Wesley was sponsoring. Wesley knew that he was making a comfortable salary and he accused him of covetousness. Later he found that this man had lived a dissolute youth but that after his conversion he had assumed all the debts of his past and was living on a fraction of his salary while he put most of his money to the paying of debts which could not now be legally collected.

We are saved by faith and by faith alone. But one of the truest tests of the difference between genuine faith and a false substitute for it is the way in which a genuine faith drives men to seek peace with God through the costly effort to make right the wrongs of the past. In the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous we find such statements as these: "5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. 7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. 8. *Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.* 9. *Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.*"[4] In our own generation the Oxford Group and Alcoholics Anonymous have discovered the healing power involved in confession of the sins of the past with a fearless effort to make them right if possible. They can give us many examples of how the application of these principles has brought about the re-creation of personalities. But these groups in the modern world have not discovered truths which were not in Christianity from the beginning.

We always admire the man who has the courage to clean up his past. Among the pictures of great moments in human lives there are few more touching than the picture of Onesimus the runaway slave as he places a letter from Paul in his pocket and sets out on the long road that leads from Rome back to Colossae. He is going back to slavery in order that he may find in his soul the freedom of those who are sons of God and heirs together of the life which is eternal.

ARCHIPPUS 30

"And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it."—Colossians 4:17

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Colossians 1:23-29; 4:15-18; Philemon 1-3

In the opening verses of the letter to Philemon, we read: "Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer, and to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house."[1] From the intimacy of this salutation, we would probably be right in assuming that Apphia was the wife of Philemon and that Archippus was their son. And as Paul is bringing the letter to the Colossians to a close he writes: "And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it."

Archippus must have been a young man who early in the ministry of Paul in Ephesus gave his heart to the Lord and entered actively into the campaign to win Asia for Christ. The reference to the ministry which he has received in the Lord would lead us to believe that Paul recognized the outstanding abilities of this young man and ordained him to the Gospel ministry. During the time of his ministry in Ephesus, Paul and Archippus stood together as fellow soldiers for Christ in a spiritual campaign which powerfully affected the life of Ephesus and spread rapidly to the surrounding cities. When men stand together for Christ and against the evil of their world they are bound together in the deepest kind of Christian fellowship. After Paul left Ephesus, Archippus continued to carry on the work of witnessing for Christ. He may have become the pastor of the church at Colossae. In any event Paul knows that the min-

istry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been laid upon Archippus, and Paul urges him to discharge fully the obligations of his ministry.

In the same letter in which Paul sends this charge to Archippus, he sets forth his understanding of the task of the Christian ministry. As we think through what is involved in being a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ we can understand more fully the charge that was given to young Archippus. In Colossians, chapter one, verse twenty-three, Paul writes: "Be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; *whereof I Paul am made a minister.*" In verse twenty-four, he speaks of the afflictions which he has endured in Christ "for his body's sake, which is the church: *whereof I am made a minister,* according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God." In both of these expressions, Paul uses the passive voice. He knows that the Lord has laid His hand upon him, putting him into the ministry. We cannot force all men into the same pattern. Some men come into the ministry out of a sudden and overwhelming experience. Others move into it gradually as the result of a steadily deepening conviction. But in either case, a man is in the ministry because it is his understanding that this is the will of the Lord for him.

Paul says that his purpose as a minister is to proclaim "the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."[2] It is the minister's purpose to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He has received this Gospel through the revelation which God has made of Himself in the life, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The minister seeks through his testimony to lead men to the place of surrender to Jesus Christ. He has performed his function when through him men and women have come into a vital relation to the living Lord. Paul writes to the Galatians: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you."[3] The minister preaches in the hope that the

Lord through the sermon will confront men with all of His claims on their lives. He knows that in leading men to Christ he is introducing them to the One who is their hope of glory. The utter seriousness of our earthly life is that in it men make decisions which are eternal in their consequences.

In verse twenty-eight of this first chapter of Colossians, Paul writes: "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." The ministry of preaching includes both warning and teaching. The minister must warn men of the consequences of the way of evil. He must remind men that they live in a moral universe in which they cannot violate the laws of God with impunity. He must make it clear that the wrath of God rests upon those who refuse to accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour. He must carry on a ministry of teaching. This teaching must be directed to the individual. Men are not saved in mass. There is nothing more intensely personal than the time of decision for or against Jesus Christ.

The minister as teacher must lead his people into an understanding of the meaning of the Gospel in all of its implications for human life. Paul in his speech to the Ephesian elders says: "I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."[4] The inference is that if he had failed to declare unto them the whole counsel of God he would have been responsible for the ignorance of his people. The minister must cover in his preaching and teaching the whole field of Christian truth.

The minister's purpose is to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. It is not enough to lead men to the place of repentance and surrender. Christians must "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."[5] The minister must seek to develop his people in their understanding of Christian truth and in their capacity to give a Christian witness. If the final test of a teacher is the knowledge of his pupils, the final test of a Christian minister is the spiritual development of his people. The minister must stay with his people until they come to the end of their earthly pilgrimage and are ready to

pass over the great divide to meet their Lord face to face in the resurrection world of God.

As Paul faces his task as a minister of the church of Christ he writes: "Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily."[6] A more literal translation of the opening phrase would be, "unto which I also toil, *agonizing*." The last word is borrowed from the athletic games. It represents the strain of the athlete as with every ounce of his strength bent to the struggle he seeks to surpass his adversary. Those who have run in the races know the intensity of this physical strain. This figure is seized upon by Paul to describe the spiritual struggle with which he goes about his task of molding men. It is very difficult for the average layman to appreciate the spiritual strain of the true minister. He will come in after a day of visiting completely exhausted, exhausted in a way that the man who toils only with his physical muscles will never know, an exhaustion which is of a different order from that which is known by the weary brain. His work has commanded all of his powers of mind, of heart, and of soul. The man who is called upon to mold the souls of men has the most glorious task in the world, but he is certain to discharge it at cost to himself. It is in the passage which we are studying that Paul says: "I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church."[7]

The literal translation of the closing phrase of the first chapter of Colossians is "according to the energy of Him, the one energizing in me in power." The word translated "energy" is a word which the New Testament never uses for power exerted by men. It is reserved to describe a power which is superhuman. The word translated "power" is consistently used for a force exercised by men. The minister is the medium through which that divine power which is lodged in Christ is released for the redemption of men. He goes into a community in power because God's power is working in and through him. The minister is the ambassador of Christ, and through him the living Lord is touching the lives of men.

There must have been a very close fellowship between Paul and the men whom he ordained to the Gospel ministry. Paul had none of the mediums of mass communication which we have at our disposal today. He knew that he could accomplish his task of presenting Christ to his generation only as he found and trained men who would go out to give their lives to witness for Christ. He found young men like Archippus and laid upon them the obligation of discharging fully the ministry which they had received in the Lord. These men and Paul stood together as fellow soldiers for Jesus Christ. They were enlisted in a Christian army that took seriously the task of bringing the nations to the place of discipleship to Jesus Christ. As we see the understanding of the task of the Christian ministry which Paul sets forth in the first chapter of Colossians we can get the full meaning of the charge to Archippus: "Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it."

EPAPHRAS 31

"Epaphras . . . a faithful minister of Christ."—Colossians 1:7

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Colossians 1:3-14; 4:12-13; Philemon 23

The name Epaphras is a shortened form of the name Epaphroditus. But while they had the same name we need to distinguish clearly between Epaphroditus of Philippi and Epaphras of Colossae. Epaphroditus is the bearer of the offering of the Philippians to Paul in Rome. After a serious illness in Rome, brought on probably by his exertions in the spread of the Gospel in Rome, Epaphroditus returns to his home bearing the letter to the Philippians. Epaphras is a native of Colossae. Probably he was converted to Christ during the ministry of Paul in Ephesus. He heard the Christian message and surrendered himself to Jesus as Saviour and Lord. Paul refers to him as his fellow servant in Christ. Both men considered themselves slaves of Jesus Christ.

Epaphras became a trusted evangelist who was used of the Lord Jesus to establish the church in Asia. He was probably the first man to preach the Gospel in Colossae. Through his preaching, and through the work of men like Philemon and others, there grew up in Colossae a believing community. Not satisfied with the planting of the Gospel in his home town, Epaphras moved on to Laodicea and then to Hierapolis. He must have played a large part in the establishment of these churches.

Epaphras left his field and made a visit to Paul in Rome during the period of the first imprisonment. We are not told why he went to Rome but we can hazard a guess. There had appeared in his church at Colossae a false teaching which has come to be known as the Colossian heresy. A close study of the letter to the

Colossians enables us to describe this heresy with some accuracy. It contained some elements borrowed from Jewish ritualism, but at its core it was an attempt to accommodate Christianity to Greek thought. We have here the beginning of the long battle between Christianity and the great Gnostic systems of the second century. We are safe in saying that Epaphras went to Rome to report the developments at Colossae and to get the advice of Paul concerning the handling of this difficult situation. The letter to the Colossians was written as the result of this visit.

In Rome, Epaphras must have met Onesimus, the runaway slave of Philemon. Perhaps the identification of Onesimus by Epaphras played a part in Paul's decision to send Onesimus back to his master. In Rome, Epaphras was arrested and placed in prison with Paul.[1] We do not know the cause of his arrest, but his zeal for evangelism may have led him into conflict with the Roman authorities. When Tychicus and Onesimus set out from Rome for Asia with the letters to the Ephesians and Colossians and the personal letter to Philemon, Epaphras did not accompany them. He could not go because he was in jail in Rome.

Epaphras was the bearer to Colossae of "the word of the truth, the gospel."[2] He carried to Colossae the good news of what God had done in Jesus Christ. The Gospel begins as news. It is the witness of men to the mighty works of God. Epaphras told the Colossians that the Almighty God, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, had sent His only begotten Son to be born of woman, to live our life, to die our death, and to rise triumphant over the grave. He gave the witness of the apostles to the risen Lord. But Epaphras did not declare in his preaching an isolated event of history which had no vital relation to the lives of the people at Colossae. He told them that the Son of God had loved them. He proclaimed the forgiveness of God which is based on that which God in Christ has done for us. He said that in Christ "we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."[3] He told the Colossians that God would deliver them from the powers of darkness and transfer them "to the kingdom of his beloved Son."[4] A displaced person who has lived under an irresponsible and evil dictatorship and has at last been

settled in a land of freedom can have a vivid understanding of the figure of speech used here. The word of the Gospel comes to men who are in slavery to their own lusts and points them to One who can deliver them. It comes to those who are under the control of the powers of darkness and it speaks of life under the lordship of the Christ. When the letter to the Colossians was written, the promise of Epaphras had actually been fulfilled. There was at Colossae a community of believing people who had actually been delivered from the powers of darkness and transferred to the Kingdom of the Son of God.

Epaphras brought also to the Colossians the word of the hope which was laid up for them in the heavens. Mankind has stopped baffled and defeated at the grave. But Epaphras was the bearer of a message from One who had triumphed over death. He told the Colossians that Jesus had gone to prepare a place for them and that He would come again to receive them unto Himself.[5] To broken and defeated men he brought the hope of an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, laid up in heaven for them.[6]

To the Colossians, Epaphras was a faithful minister of Christ. He was faithful in the delivering of the message which he had received from Paul. The message of the Gospel is the most glorious message ever to be proclaimed by human lips. It is a word of promise, but it also involves a word of warning. If it tells of Heaven, it speaks also of Hell. It warns of punishment after death for those who reject the Gospel. Jesus came not to condemn the world but to save the world. This does not change the fact that those who refuse to believe remain condemned. The Gospel is the word of life to those who receive the Son. But it reminds us that those who have not the Son shall not see life. Epaphras, like his teacher, could say that he was pure from the blood of all men because he had not shunned to declare unto them the whole counsel of God.[7]

In the closing chapter of the letter to the Colossians, Paul gives a beautiful picture of Epaphras. The evangelist to Asia is in prison now, but in prison he is praying for his converts in Colossae, in Laodicea, and in Hierapolis. We have here a satisfying glimpse of the prayer life that lies behind the tremendous

evangelistic activity which is reflected in the pages of the New Testament. Paul uses very vivid words to describe the spiritual agony which goes into intercessory prayer. He says that Epaphras is wrestling in prayer for his converts. When he writes to the Galatians he tells them that he is in travail for them until Christ is born in them.[8] Behind every true church there is the spiritual travail of some saint of God. The power of evil is not broken without struggle. Spiritual victory comes at a cost.

The prayer of Epaphras is that his converts "may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." The Greek words here carry two ideas which are best translated by the words *matured* and *fully assured.* God had blessed the ministry of Epaphras. He had seen men turn from the power of Satan to the power of God. In his three churches, he had seen many of his converts make their confession of faith, receive baptism, and take their place in the Christian community. But regardless of how we explain it, the rate of loss in such a situation is often very high. Men make the start but fail to endure unto the end. The concern of Epaphras is the double concern of every Christian minister. He wants to see men make the start. They can never realize the purpose of God in Christ for them unless they are ready to acknowledge Jesus as Lord. But the Christian minister wants also to see his people grow in grace until in some measure they become Christ-like in character. He wants to see the Gospel bear fruit in changed lives. He wants to see transformed individuals and a changed community. He wants to be sure that his people will finally enter the eternal city of God. The second word carries with it the note of assurance. It is the concern of the Christian minister that God shall give to his people the assured knowledge that they are children of God. Epaphras was praying that his people might have the assurance of grace and salvation.

Epaphras was a man of prayer and a man of action. Paul bears him witness that he has worked hard in the building of his churches. But the activity that men could see was not as costly to him as the spiritual travail in which he bore his people daily before the throne of God. As a man of prayer and as a man of action he was indeed "a faithful minister of Christ."

DEMAS 32

"For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica."—II Timothy 4:10

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Colossians 4:14; Philemon 24

Demas was a deserter among the men around Paul. He was not a Judas. He did not betray the leader of his cause for thirty pieces of silver. But he did forsake the Apostle to the Gentiles in his hour of need.

The references to Demas in the Scripture are so limited that we can quote them in full. As he brings the letter to the Colossians to a close, Paul writes: "Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas greet you."[1] In the letter to Philemon which was probably written at the same time, Paul writes, "There salute thee Epaphras, my fellowprisoner in Christ Jesus; Marcus, Aristarchus, *Demas,* Lucas, my fellowlabourers."[2] And in the closing chapter of the second letter to Timothy, Paul says: "Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: for *Demas* hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me."[3]

These references are very brief, but when they are seen against the background of our knowledge of Paul's life as a whole, they give us the framework for a picture of this man, Demas. It is clear that he was by birth a Gentile. The reference in Colossians is properly quoted to show that Luke was a Gentile.[4] As Luke and Demas are mentioned together, the argument which leads us to the conclusion that Luke was a Gentile will prove also that Demas was a Gentile.

In each of the three places in which his name appears, Demas is mentioned along with Luke. This may be merely a coincidence,

but the probability is that it indicates a close friendship between Luke and Demas. Such a friendship reveals much about Demas. The man who was worthy of being the intimate friend of Luke must have been a man of real consecration and of unusual ability.

Demas held an honored place in the little circle of men who gathered around Paul. His qualification for this is given in Paul's description of him to Philemon. Paul calls him, "Demas . . . my fellowlabourer." Paul and Demas were bound together by the fact that they were both laborers for Christ. They acknowledged the same Lord and they were dedicated to doing His work in the world. They were working together at the task of building the Kingdom of God. They were standing together against the powers of evil.

There is no fellowship on earth any nobler than that fine fellowship between men who are workers together for Christ. A man who had played through a hard season in college football told his friends of the fellowship which is born when men stand together as a team. He went on to say that there was a group of men on the campus who were closer to him even than the members of the team. He explained that he was referring to the men who had labored with him in the carrying on of the work of the Y. M. C. A. in that college. When men stand in Christ's name against the evil of a community, they are bound together in a fellowship which is deeply meaningful. When men recognize each other as laborers for Christ, they have an abiding basis of friendship.

Demas was one of the group of men who gathered around Paul in his first imprisonment. Even then the profession of Christianity was not without some risk. When Epaphras came from Colossae to Paul in Rome at the time of the first imprisonment he got into trouble with the law and found himself a prisoner along with Paul.[5] But on the whole, Paul's position during this imprisonment was not one of great hardship. He was permitted to have his own hired house and to preach the Gospel with no man forbidding him.[6]

In the second imprisonment, as reflected in II Timothy, the situation is completely changed. As Christianity has grown in

Rome the attitude of the Roman government has changed from toleration to active persecution. Paul is now a prisoner who is recognized as the leader of a persecuted sect. His friends are deserting him. It is dangerous for men to have their names associated with him. But some at least of his friends gather around him. In the last chapter of II Timothy Paul mentions Crescens, Titus, Tychicus, Luke, and Demas. As of old, Paul directs them in their common task of proclaiming the Gospel. Tychicus is sent to Ephesus. Crescens is to go to Galatia. Titus is Paul's messenger to Dalmatia. Luke and Demas decide to remain with Paul. They plan to minister as best they can to his needs and to seek to carry on the Christian witness in Rome.

A little later Demas deserted Paul. He left Rome for Thessalonica, leaving to Luke alone the responsibility that he and Luke had started out to bear together. Paul's need was so great that he had to write to Timothy urging him to come at once and take up the task that Demas had left unfinished. Paul gives the reason behind the leaving of Demas. He says, "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." Demas loved this present world. He loved freedom and he was afraid that the service of Paul in Rome might be for him the way of imprisonment. He loved life and he knew that he was risking his life by staying near Paul. He could not face the danger, the suffering, the fear of death. He fled, leaving Luke alone with Paul.

We must not be too hard on Demas. Most of us have not faced his decision. But we must look at the cause of his failure. There is, of course, nothing wrong with the love of the good things of this life. Jesus Himself came eating and drinking. Paul was not an ascetic. He enjoyed life. He wanted his followers to enjoy the good things which God has given to men. He condemns those who forbid to marry and command to abstain from meats. He insists that the good things of life have been created by God and that they are to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth. Paul and the friends who gathered around him must have had some wonderful times together.

But while Paul was not an ascetic, he knew that the true follower of Christ must put the doing of Christ's work ahead of

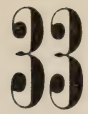
considerations of personal comfort. He knew that the Christian must be ready if necessary to die for his faith. There is no virtue in enduring hardship. But the good soldier of Jesus Christ must be prepared to suffer hardship in the service of God. Paul gives expression to his own attitude when he refuses to be turned aside from his final visit to Jerusalem. To friends who were trying to persuade him not to go, Paul says: "What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."[7] The failure of Demas was not that he loved the good things of this present world. He deserted his post because he loved the things of this world more than he loved the Kingdom of God.

It was the vision of the reality of the world of God which lies beyond this present world that nerved the early Christians to endure suffering and even death in the hope of laying hold of eternal life. In the same chapter in which Paul makes his reference to Demas he writes to Timothy: "But be thou sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry. For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing."[8] And in the eighteenth verse of the same chapter he says: "The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be the glory for ever and ever." With the vision of the eternal Kingdom before him Paul could overcome the temptation to love too well this present world. In the second chapter of this same letter he speaks of the "salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." He then quotes what is probably a fragment of a hymn that the persecuted Christians were singing:

> "If we have died with him, we shall also live with him;
> if we endure, we shall also reign with him;
> if we deny him, he also will deny us;
> if we are faithless, he remains faithful—

for he cannot deny himself."[9] It was because his vision of the eternal life that lies beyond this present world had grown dim that Demas deserted Paul and went to Thessalonica. We do not know the end of Demas, but we can hope that his desertion was temporary, and that he came back to Paul in time to receive Paul's forgiveness, and that like Browning's Lost Leader he waits: "Pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne!"

HYMENAEUS AND ALEXANDER



"Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme."—I Timothy 1:19-20

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
I Timothy 1:18-20; II Timothy 2:17; 4:14-18; Acts 19:33

Hymenaeus and Alexander are mentioned together in I Timothy 1:20. A man named Hymenaeus is listed again in II Timothy 2:17. In this reference he is associated with a man named Philetus, a leader of a heretical sect which Paul says is working like a cancer in the Christian community. As the name Hymenaeus is not a familiar one it is probable that Paul is referring to the same man in both passages. A man named Alexander is mentioned in II Timothy 4:14-18. He was a coppersmith who had done much harm to Paul. We have no way of knowing whether or not he is to be identified with the Alexander of I Timothy 1:20 or with the Jewish leader of Acts 19:33.

We will confine our study of these men to the statements which Paul makes concerning them in the opening chapter of I Timothy. On the basis of this passage we can say that Hymenaeus and Alexander were at one time members in good standing in the early Christian community. But they first lost a good conscience and then made shipwreck of their faith. Paul says that he delivered them to Satan that they might learn not to blaspheme.

The reference which Paul makes to Hymenaeus and Alexander is given in connection with his charge to Timothy to "war a good warfare; holding faith, and a good conscience." Our human life has in it always an element of struggle. We must make our adjustments to that which life brings to us. Paul tells Timothy that as he faces life he is to fight a good fight. Every age and

every condition in life has its peculiar temptations. We can put up a winning fight against that which life brings us or we can go down before life as defeated personalities. Paul tells young Timothy that as he faces the battle of life he is to hold on to faith and to a good conscience. This is sound advice. If in the battle of life a man holds on to his Christian faith and to a good conscience he has an excellent chance of becoming a victorious personality.

As part of this advice Paul reminds Timothy that there are some people who have first lost a good conscience and then have made shipwreck of their faith. He mentions Hymenaeus and Alexander as outstanding examples of this process. What does he mean when he speaks of "having put away a good conscience"? God has given to every man the capacity to know the difference between right and wrong, the power to choose between right and wrong, and also the feeling that he ought to choose the right. The knowledge of good and evil carries with it the sense of obligation to do the good. Our conscience "hurts" us when we choose the evil.

Men differ in their capacity to discern good and evil. There are some whose consciences are very sensitive. There are others who have disobeyed the voice of conscience for so long that they have dulled their sense of right and wrong. But Paul is convinced that whenever men accuse or excuse one another they bear witness to the innate sense of good and evil which is found to some extent in every human being.[1] At one time in Charlotte, North Carolina, three junior-age boys were on trial for stealing. It came out in the trial that one of the boys who was supposed to have shared equally with the others the money they had stolen from a home had actually found thirty-five dollars but had hidden twenty dollars and given five dollars apiece to each of the boys. When the two boys learned that they had been double-crossed, they forgot that they were in a courtroom and were ready to beat up the other boy then and there. In so doing they bore witness to the voice of conscience. We reveal most clearly our sense of right and wrong when someone has wronged us.

We do not know just what it was that Hymenaeus and Alex-

ander did. We do know that they failed to listen to the voice of conscience. And because they did not listen to conscience, they made shipwreck of their faith. The movement may be the other way. A man who has once been a member of the Christian community may fall away from the faith. He may enter a period of doubt in which he no longer believes in Jesus as the Christ the Son of God. His doubts may arise because of his inability to harmonize his knowledge of science or history with the faith he once believed. The honest doubt of the seeker after truth may lead in the end to a faith that is more adequately grounded. But those who pass through times of doubt may end up in indecision or in confirmed unbelief. They may lose their faith and still seek to hold on to a good conscience. If they do this they will probably find in time that with their loss of faith the foundations of their moral code have been in part undermined. The Ten Commandments come to us with authority because they are the commands of God. Jesus commands our obedience because we recognize Him as the Son of God.

But in the case of Hymenaeus and Alexander the movement was not from broken faith to immoral living. Their failure began when they ceased to hold on to a good conscience. They may have been guilty of sexual immorality. They may have become dishonest in their business. Whatever they did, they did the thing that the voice of conscience said was wrong. They persevered in evil and sought to silence the dictates of conscience. The result was that having put away conscience they also lost their faith.

It is not surprising that those who violate conscience tend to drop out of the Christian community. The church reminds them of the moral order which they are ignoring. The church proclaims a God who is the vindicator of the moral order. Those who have put away conscience are not comfortable in the place of worship.

A man cannot avoid living with himself. And every man seeks in one way or another to justify himself. For this reason a man tends inevitably to reject the beliefs that do not harmonize with his way of living. The man who is committed to immoral

living seeks to put out of his heart the knowledge of God as the righteous judge of the universe. Hymenaeus and Alexander came at last to the place at which they were ready to deny the faith they had once professed and to join with the heathen in blaspheming the name of Jesus.

Paul writes that he delivered these men unto Satan that they might learn not to blaspheme. What does Paul mean when he says that he "delivered them unto Satan"? In his *Letters to Young Churches,* J. B. Phillips translates this: "I had to expel them from the Church to teach them not to blaspheme."[2] It may be that Paul had the sentence of excommunication passed on these men. It is possible that having blasphemed the name of Jesus they took the initiative and separated themselves from the church. In either case, Paul knows that these two have ceased to be servants of Christ and that for the present they belong to the forces of evil. This is a hard saying, but it is true to the facts of human experience. When a man ceases to be guided by the dictates of his conscience he becomes a part of the kingdom of evil. When we refuse to serve Christ we choose to serve Satan. We must take our side either with the good or the evil of our community. If we lose a good conscience and make shipwreck of our faith we become in time identified with the forces of evil. The man who becomes a seducer, a grafter, a criminal, or a skeptic, will leave behind him a trail of moral wreckage. Such a man becomes a servant of Satan.

But Paul has not given up hope for Hymenaeus and Alexander. He realizes that for the present they are serving Satan. He knows that God has so ordered His universe that the way of sin is also the way of sorrow. His hope is that through the very bitterness of their experiences in the road of sin Hymenaeus and Alexander will come back to the place at which they are ready again to acknowledge Jesus as Lord. The prodigal son left his home and went into the far country. He wasted his substance in riotous living. He came at last to the place of slavery and want. But in the far country he came to himself and was ready to arise and go to his father. The way of the transgressor is hard. Sin brings sorrow. Selfishness brings loneliness. As we walk the way

of sin we lose our self-respect and in time we lose the respect of others. The way of lust is not the way of freedom but the way of slavery. God has made the road of sin unpleasant that men may turn from it to repentance.

Paul had known the way of sin. He tells us in this same chapter that he was once a blasphemer and a persecutor. He calls himself the chief of sinners. But he knows also that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. He feels that in his own case Jesus Christ has given a pattern in which He reveals to all men His longsuffering and His infinite mercy. Hymenaeus and Alexander are guilty of gross immorality. They have made shipwreck of their faith. They are trying to live with a violated conscience. They have blasphemed the name of Jesus. They have been expelled from the Christian community. But the Christ they once professed to serve is ready to receive them if they will repent and turn to Him in renewed faith and new obedience.

ONESIPHORUS 34

"The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain."—II Timothy 1:16

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
II Timothy 1:15-18; 4:16-22

Onesiphorus is mentioned only twice in the Bible. Both references to him are found in II Timothy. He was from Ephesus. In all probability he was a convert of Paul's during his ministry in Ephesus. Paul reminds Timothy of his knowledge of the many things in which Onesiphorus had ministered to them in Ephesus. During Paul's second imprisonment in Rome, Onesiphorus found occasion to make a visit to Rome. He inquired from the Christians in Rome concerning the whereabouts of the great apostle. When he learned that Paul was in prison in Rome, he searched diligently until he found him. He must have visited him in prison a number of times. As Paul looks back upon these visits, he says that Onesiphorus oft refreshed him. Paul prays also that the Lord will grant unto him that he may find the mercy of the Lord in the day of judgment. As Paul brings the second letter to Timothy to a close he sends greetings to the household of Onesiphorus.

The visit of Onesiphorus to Paul needs to be seen against the background of our knowledge of the second imprisonment in Rome. In the first imprisonment, Paul was an accused but not a condemned man. He was a Roman citizen who had appealed his case to Caesar and was awaiting trial. He was allowed to live in his own hired house. He carried on a ministry of preaching with no man forbidding him. Paul was released from this imprisonment. He then went on another missionary journey.

As the Christian community grew rapidly in Rome, the attitude of the Roman state to Christianity underwent a profound

change. In II Timothy we have a reflection of a period in which Christianity is a persecuted faith. Paul is again in prison, but this time he is allowed none of the liberties of the first imprisonment. The situation is so fraught with danger that the friends of Paul are afraid to stand with him. In II Timothy 1:15 he writes to Timothy: "This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes." In II Timothy 4:16-17 he writes: "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." When Paul made his first defense, all of his friends deserted him. He stood alone, but he had an overwhelming sense of the reality of the presence of the Lord. He took advantage of his opportunity to give in Caesar's court and possibly to Nero himself his testimony to the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the power of God unto salvation to all who believed. The Apostle to the Gentiles preached the word of the Lord to the Gentiles in Rome. Paul did not win his freedom, but he does say that he was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. Paul may be using figurative language here, but it is just possible that he is speaking quite literally. One of the punishments for Christians was to have them fight with lions in the Roman arena. The situation was so tense that following this trial many of Paul's trusted friends left him.[1] Demas forsook him and went to Thessalonica. Only Luke remained with him.

Onesiphorus arrived in Rome at a time when it was not popular to be too closely associated with Paul. It was not the part of discretion to let it be known that Paul was your friend. But Onesiphorus ignored the danger that was involved. He went to Paul in prison in Rome. This bold act on the part of Onesiphorus was not unrelated to his past. In Ephesus he had stood for Paul. He had ministered fearlessly to the needs of Paul in Ephesus. In Rome he acted in harmony with the established pattern of his life. Deeds of heroism are not accidental. They grow out of the habits of life as a whole.

Paul says that Onesiphorus oft refreshed him. It may come to us as something of a surprise that Paul needed the ministry of a man like Onesiphorus. Paul was a dynamo of spiritual energy. In the time of crisis, the Lord stood with him and strengthened him. But just because the spiritual demands on him were very heavy, Paul needed desperately at times to receive from others a lift for his soul. The minister who moves in and out among his people is constantly called upon to minister to others. Power goes out of him. He gives help but he needs also to receive help.

The coming of Onesiphorus brought refreshment to Paul. There are some people who tire us and there are others who lift us and give us new strength for our tasks. What is it that makes a man a bore? Why do some people tire us and others refresh us? The self-centered man is usually a bore, and the Christ-centered man is the source of spiritual help. The boil on the back of a man's neck may be more interesting to him than an earthquake in Africa. But people are not usually permanently interested in the man who talks only of himself and his ailments.

The man who constantly repeats himself usually becomes a bore. This does not mean that any man can always be fresh and interesting. But the man who is still growing is the man who is fresh. The man who has closed his mind to new ideas is not apt to be stimulating in conversation. The Christian life is a spiritual pilgrimage. The man who is growing in his understanding of the Christian faith will be helpful to others.

The difference between the bore and the man who refreshes us is seldom to be measured in terms of the range of a man's educational opportunities. Many brilliant and highly educated men are tiring. And some of those who have never learned to read or write can be spiritually uplifting to those who are around them.

The man who is consistently critical of everything and everybody is certain in the end to become tiresome to those who are forced to live with him. Constructive criticism if it is given in a spirit of sympathy and appreciation may be very helpful to those who receive it. But the man who is always knocking others is usually trying to cover up his own sense of failure.

The man who is able to lift others is the man who through Christ has found victory over that which life has brought to him. The redeemed alcoholic comes to every drunkard as a living witness of the power of God to save from slavery to alcohol. The man who has come triumphantly through great sorrow can lead others to the God of all comfort. The defeated personality has little to offer to others. The man who through Christ has learned the secret of victorious living is able to give a spiritual lift to those who are around him. Paul pays a great tribute to Onesiphorus when he says: "He oft refreshed me."

Paul prays that the Lord will give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus. This is an appropriate prayer. It is true that the judgment for a man's sins falls on him and on his home. It is also true that when a man achieves a victorious personality he becomes a source of blessing to his home. The home in which Onesiphorus lived could not fail to feel the lifting power of his transformed personality. If he brought refreshment to Paul in prison he would also bring spiritual uplift to those who lived with him in the intimacy of the home.

Paul prays also that the Lord will grant unto Onesiphorus that he may find the mercy of the Lord in that day. By the expression, "in that day," Paul probably means the day of judgment. This may mean the final judgment when Christ returns. It can also mean the day of judgment which the coming of death brings to each individual. Paul had a profound sense of the work of Christ as judge. He prays that the desertion of his companions may not be laid to their charge.[2] Behind his prayer for Onesiphorus in the day of judgment there may be a memory of the words of the Lord: "I was in prison, and ye came unto me."[3] The Lord has identified Himself with the least of His followers who is in prison for righteousness' sake. Surely the same Lord did not fail to take notice of the visit of Onesiphorus to the Apostle to the Gentiles in his last imprisonment. We can be confident that this deed of Onesiphorus was not forgotten in the day of judgment.

TROPHIMUS 35

"Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick."—II Timothy 4:20

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 20:4; 21:29; I Corinthians 12:9, 28-31

"Trophimus have I left at Miletum *sick*." Paul, the Apostle of Christ, was on a journey with his trusted friend, Trophimus. Together they came to Miletus. It was at this city that Paul had spoken to the elders of Ephesus as he went to Jerusalem bearing the gifts of the Gentiles. While the two men were at Miletus, Trophimus became ill. Paul may have remained for some time in hope of the recovery of Trophimus. But as for some reason not known to us it was urgent for him to go on, he was finally forced to leave his companion sick at Miletus. When he writes to Timothy from prison in Rome, he has heard nothing from Trophimus since he was left ill at Miletus. In the light of much that is being said about divine healing today, it may be well for us to remember that Paul, the Apostle, was forced to leave his friend at Miletus sick.

Trophimus is mentioned in Acts, chapter twenty, verse four, as among those from Asia who went up to Jerusalem ahead of Paul. The names which are given here are almost certainly a roll call of the men chosen by the churches of the Gentiles to bear their gifts to the suffering saints at Jerusalem. In this deputation, Trophimus represented the great church of Ephesus. His selection as the delegate of the Ephesian church in this important matter reveals the confidence which the Christians in Ephesus had in him.

After Paul arrived, some of the Jews from Asia saw Paul and Trophimus walking together in the streets of Jerusalem. A few

days later when they saw Paul in the inner court of the Temple, they supposed that Trophimus was with him. They were mistaken in their supposition, but the mistake reveals the closeness of the association between Paul and Trophimus. These Jews were sure that if Paul was present, Trophimus would not be far away. It was this mistake which was the immediate cause of the arousing of the Jerusalem mob and the attempt to kill Paul. His life was saved by the prompt action of the chief captain, Claudius Lysias. But this was the beginning of Paul's long imprisonment, first at Caesarea and later at Rome.

About ten years after the mob scene in Jerusalem, Paul and Trophimus were again together. Paul at this time had been released from the first imprisonment and had made a journey back to Asia. When they reached Miletus, Trophimus became too ill to travel further. We can be reasonably sure that Paul and Trophimus prayed together for his recovery. But the Lord did not see fit to heal Trophimus at this time. Paul had to go on and leave him sick.

Paul's experience with Trophimus is significant in the light of the large place that a ministry of healing did have in the life of the church of the New Testament. Jesus carried on an extensive ministry of healing. His miracles were at the same time expressions of His compassion for sick and suffering men and signs to the men of His generation that the approval of God rested upon Him. The ministry of healing was never central in the work of Paul, but there were times when he healed in the name of his Lord. The work at Lystra began with a notable miracle of healing which so impressed the people of this city that they sought to worship Paul and Barnabas as gods in human form. And at Ephesus, which was not far from Miletus, Paul carried on a ministry of healing which had such remarkable success that evil men sought to imitate him.[1] The narrative of Acts is supported by various references in the Epistles. In Romans 15:19 and II Corinthians 12:12, Paul claims that Christ through him has wrought miracles as signs of his apostleship. And in I Corinthians 12:9, he lists gifts of healing as among the gifts of the Spirit. He refers to this again in the twenty-eighth and thirtieth verses

of the same chapter. It is clear that at times the early Christians carried on a ministry of divine healing in the name of their Lord. But this was a ministry in which they were the servants of their Lord. Jesus Christ remained the master of the power which at times He released through His disciples.

Those whom the Lord used as instruments of His healing ministry were not always assured of freedom from illness. The experience of Paul with his thorn in the flesh is instructive at this point. He tells us in the twelfth chapter of II Corinthians that to prevent him from falling into the sin of spiritual pride there was given to him a "thorn in the flesh." We do not know just what this thorn in the flesh was, but the very fact that it is described as being in the flesh would lead us to conclude that it was some kind of physical ailment. Paul prayed fervently three times for deliverance from this affliction. But the Lord did not see fit to heal him. Instead he received the promise of grace to bear it. His experience here is true to that of many other Christians. When some physical ailment comes it is proper to pray for healing. In many cases, this prayer will be answered. But if it is not the will of the Lord for a man to be healed, he should be prepared to accept his ailment and to pray for grace to live with it.

Paul's personal experience is confirmed also by the story of the illness of Epaphroditus as it is described for us in the letter to the Philippians. Epaphroditus came to Paul at Rome as the bearer of the gifts of the Philippians. He plunged into the work at Rome with such zeal that he finally went down with a spell of sickness that might have proved fatal. Paul watched by the bedside of his sick friend. He prayed for his recovery lest this sorrow should be added to the sorrows he already had. The Lord saw fit to answer the prayers of Paul. Epaphroditus passed the crisis of the disease and finally made a complete recovery. Paul gave thanks that the life of his friend had been spared.[2] We have here the story of a triumphant struggle with disease which is true to the experience of many Christians today.

Luke was one of the most intimate of the friends of Paul. He was the only man to stay with Paul in the second imprisonment in Rome. Luke was a doctor. He was known in the Christian

community as the beloved physician. He used his medical skill in a healing ministry to the people of his day. We should not underestimate the genuine knowledge of medicine which was to be found in the doctors of the ancient world. In recent years the practice of medicine has made great advances. The trained doctor today can carry on a ministry of healing which was impossible to the doctors of the first century. But Luke and the doctors of today would agree that the purpose of the practice of medicine is to carry on a ministry of healing through the treatment of the causes of disease.

There was no conflict between the gifts of healing as they appeared in the early Church and the ministry of Luke. They represented different approaches to the problem of disease. And within its sphere of action each approach was valid. For a time, medicine in the modern world became so engrossed with the amazing discoveries of science that doctors tended to neglect the ministry of healing which arises out of our mental and emotional attitudes. We cannot measure the power of mind over body. And we will set no limits on the power of our Lord to move in healing power in the bodies of men. The risen Lord is still able both to forgive our sins and to heal our diseases. But just because this power is in Him and not in us we must always acknowledge that He is the master of it.

If it is foolish for the doctor to neglect the healing which comes through faith, it is equally foolish for Christians to ignore the power to heal which has been entrusted to the skilled doctor. A revived interest in faith healing which sought to discredit or ignore the importance of the work of the doctor could bring tragic consequences in the lives of many individuals. We need today to remember that there was no conflict between the skill of Luke and the gifts of healing in the early Christian community.

The gifts of healing which were found in the early Church did not alter the human situation in which man is subject to sickness and death. And the doctor today knows that all of life is still marked by existence unto death. The probability is that Luke was with Paul at Miletus and that Paul and Luke had to go on to Rome leaving Trophimus sick. Probably they never

met again in this world. But we can be sure that the Lord was able to preserve them unto His heavenly Kingdom. In times of sickness, when the thought of death is apt to be present with us, we need most to believe in One who can take us to be with Him in His eternal Kingdom.

NERO 36

"I appeal unto Caesar."—Acts 25:11
"The Lord stood with me, and strengthened me . . . and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion."—II Timothy 4:17

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:
Acts 25—27; II Timothy 4

When Festus followed Felix as governor of Judea, the Jews sought to take advantage of the change of governors to get a sentence of death against Paul. Festus refused to give this judgment against his prisoner without hearing the case. At the close of the trial which followed, Festus asked Paul if he was willing to go from Caesarea to Jerusalem and there to be judged before him of the things whereof he was accused. Paul knew that if he went to Jerusalem, he would face the attempt of the Jews to kill him on the road between Caesarea and Jerusalem. It was in this setting that he invoked his rights as a Roman citizen and appealed his case to Caesar.

Paul had a double motive in this appeal. He appealed from the injustice he was certain to receive at the hands of the Jews to the hope of justice in the highest courts of Roman law. There must also have been present in his mind the knowledge that the appeal to Caesar would make it necessary for the authorities to send him to Rome. In all of his life as a missionary, he had wanted to go to Rome. We can be sure that Paul was not interested in seeing the sights of the imperial city. He wanted to go to Rome that he might help to lay in Rome the foundations of a church which would move out from Rome to the conquest of the known world for Christ.

It is part of the irony of fate that when Paul appealed to Caesar's judgment seat, the man who sat on the throne of the Caesars was Nero, the last of the family of the Caesars and the

worst of the emperors of Rome.[1] Nero was born in A. D. 37—just about the time of Paul's conversion to Christianity. He was the son of Ahenobarbus and Agrippina. His mother later married the Emperor Claudius and when Nero was twelve years old he became the adopted son of the Emperor. His teacher was the philosopher, Seneca, brother of Gallio, and one of the noblest of the Romans. At the death of Claudius when Nero was eighteen years old, he was chosen Emperor in preference to Britannicus, the son of Claudius. The opening years of Nero's reign were marked by moderation and good promise. But in time the evil of his nature asserted itself. He caused Britannicus to be treacherously poisoned because he dreaded him as a rival. He fell under the influence of a woman named Poppaea Sabina. She was a beautiful woman whose influence over him was consistently for evil. She caused his mother, Agrippina, to be assassinated. To please Poppaea he first divorced and later murdered his wife, Octavia. Later in a fit of passion he kicked his wife, Poppaea, who was at the time with child, in such a way that both mother and child died. He grew suspicious of his teacher, Seneca, and caused both Seneca and his brother, Gallio, to be put to death. This list of crimes reveals a man, the slave of his own lusts and passions, who was descending into the lowest depths of iniquity.

The crimes of Nero in his home life were such that we turn away from him with horror. His public life was not on a higher plane. His government was marked by inefficiency, waste, and extravagance. In A. D. 64 there occurred the great fire of Rome. About two-thirds of the city was destroyed. The cause of the fire was unknown, but the people accused Nero of having had the city set on fire. Tacitus believed that there were grounds for the suspicion. He says that ruffians were seen thrusting burning brands into buildings and that when the citizens remonstrated with them they protested that they had orders from higher up. The report was that while the city was burning Nero sat on the porch of his palace, playing on his lyre and declaiming odes descriptive of burning Troy. It is from this scene that we get the phrase, "fiddling while Rome burns." It applies to any man who sits in the seat of government and concerns himself with

the trivial and unimportant in a time of crisis that demands quick and decisive action.

To divert from himself the wrath of the people because of the burning of their city, Nero accused the Christians of having set the city on fire. The description of the persecution of Christians following the great fire of Rome is given by Tacitus in his *Annals,* XV, 44. It is here that we have one of the earliest, if not the earliest, undisputed reference to Christ in Roman literature. From this point of view the passage is invaluable, but our interest in it is in its revelation of the character of Nero. We are told that Nero having accused the Christians of burning the city persecuted them with great vigor. Tacitus says that the Christians were burned to serve as lights at night in the garden of the Emperor. They were destroyed not for the public good "but to glut one man's cruelty." This man was the Caesar to whom Paul appealed.

Did Paul ever stand before Nero? The question cannot be answered with certainty, but it would seem reasonable to suppose that at the end of his period of waiting for a trial before Caesar, Paul did stand face to face with Nero. The probability is that nothing happened in this trial, which must have come about A. D. 62. Paul's accusers may not have followed him to Rome and his case was probably dismissed for lack of evidence.

Second Timothy, however, reflects a very different situation. Here Paul is again a prisoner. He has had a preliminary trial. He expects a second trial in the near future and he is practically certain of a sentence of death. The attitude of the Roman state has radically changed and Paul has little hope of surviving. Whether or not Paul stood before Nero at the end of this second imprisonment we cannot say. We can say that about A. D. 67 Paul was again a prisoner in Rome and at this time Nero still sat in the seat of the Caesars. We may have in Second Timothy, chapter four, verses sixteen and seventeen, the description of a scene in which Paul testifies before Nero.

There is something strangely wrong with a world in which a Paul stands as a prisoner in chains and a Nero sits in the judgment seat. But on second thought the picture is not impossible.

The prophet and the apostle stand for the righteousness of God in the midst of sinful society. A complacent society is always more afraid of its prophets than of its criminals. It is not unusual for evil men like Nero to seize for a time the places of secular power.

What could Nero do to Paul? Of course, Nero could order him executed. But Paul's Master had said, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."[2] As Paul writes his farewell to Timothy, he knows that the time of his departure is at hand. He has fought the good fight. He has finished the course. He has kept the faith. He is confident that the Lord will deliver him from every evil work and will preserve him unto His heavenly Kingdom. There is not much that a Nero can do to a Paul.

What can Paul say to Nero? When Paul explained the Christian faith to Felix, he talked of righteousness, self-control, and judgment to come. As he revealed to guilty Felix the wrath of a just and righteous God, Felix trembled. In a similar way, Paul could lead Nero to see himself as he was weighed in the balances of God. One great argument for punishment beyond the grave is the simple fact that a righteous God cannot permit a man like Nero to fail to reap the consequences of his evil deeds.

But if Nero had been willing to hear it, Paul could have spoken to him a deeper word than the word of wrath. Paul was the bearer of a Gospel, and the heart of that Gospel was that Jesus Christ had died for sinners, even for sinners like Nero. Paul could have told the guilty Nero that he also had been a persecutor of the Church and that he had received mercy. We have no reason to think that Nero ever repented, but if he had repented and put his faith in that which God had done for him in Christ, he would have found forgiveness and pardon.

The probability is that Nero and Paul died at about the same time. The stroke of the executioner's ax was to Paul the time when he could go out to be with Christ. Nero died a suicide at the age of thirty-two. When we remember his crimes, we tremble to think what it meant when he stood at the judgment seat of Christ.

EPILOGUE

In a study of the people around Paul, there are some who stand out as chief among his friends or as leaders of those who opposed him. But the richness of a story is often found in the study of its minor characters. These lesser characters in the story of Paul come to us with an amazing amount of human interest. We are amused, for example, at the distortion of truth to his own advantage in the letter of Claudius Lysias to Felix.[1] He represents himself as having rescued Paul because he was a Roman. The truth was that he did not learn that he was a Roman until after he had arrested Paul and was about to examine him by scourging. We appreciate the action of Julius, the centurion in charge of prisoners on the voyage to Rome. He was willing to risk his life and the loss of the other prisoners to save Paul.[2] We become interested in the dilemma of Sceva, the renegade Jew, who sought to practice exorcism in the name of the Jesus whom Paul preached. We think often of the words of the evil spirit to him, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?"[3] We remember Paul's indictment of Alexander, the coppersmith, as one who had done him much evil. We wonder just how he had withstood Paul and why Paul felt it necessary to warn Timothy of him.[4]

Even more interesting than these comments concerning the men who opposed him are a number of references to his friends which are often overlooked. We find ourselves absorbed in the story of Eutychus, the young man who went to sleep while Paul was preaching at Troas. Preachers today can find some comfort in

remembering that some people went to sleep even when Paul was preaching. And there is something to be said for Eutychus. Paul violated all the rules of homiletics and preached all night. The story is preserved as the record of the miracle of the raising of the dead which the Lord wrought through Paul.[5]

We would like to know more of Aristarchus and Gaius. They were men of Macedonia, companions of Paul in travel. The Ephesian mob when they failed to catch Paul seized these friends and dragged them into the ampitheater. There is no record of their being injured but they probably received rough treatment.[6] Aristarchus appears again as the representative of the church at Thessalonica in the delegation sent by the churches to accompany Paul on the final trip to Jerusalem and to bear the offering of the Gentiles to the suffering saints of Judea.[7] The same man accompanies Paul when he goes by ship as a prisoner to Rome.[8] When Paul writes the letter to the Colossians, Aristarchus is a prisoner at Rome.[9] The Gaius of Derbe[10] who was also in the delegation to Jerusalem must have been a different man from the Gaius of Macedonia who was caught in the Ephesian mob.

We would like to know more about a man named Erastus. He was treasurer of the city of Corinth. He joins Paul in sending greetings to the church at Rome.[11] In Acts, chapter nineteen, verse twenty-two, he is listed along with Timothy as one who ministered to Paul. Did this man give up his official position as treasurer of Corinth to become a messenger of Paul to the churches? He appears again in Second Timothy as having journeyed with Paul just before the final arrest. Perhaps he was saved from imprisonment by stopping for a visit in his native city. We would like to know if the Sosthenes who joins Paul in the greetings of First Corinthians is to be identified with the ruler of the synagogue whom the Greeks flogged in the presence of Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia. Perhaps the humiliation of this beating led in the end to his conversion to the Christian faith.[12] We would remember also the work of Stephanas in raising the offering for the saints at Jerusalem.[13]

Of particular interest to us in the study of these characters around Paul who are not so well known is the closing chapter of

the letter to the Romans. The chapter as a whole is an amazing document. Paul had never been to Rome but he mentions by name as definite individuals in the Roman church nearly thirty people. Many of these references are accompanied by a little phrase which shows an intimate knowledge of the person mentioned. Paul's friendships were always deeply personal. They were never purely professional. These references illustrate also the important place of woman in the Pauline world church. The names indicate that at least nine of the thirty were women.

While most of these references are no more than names to us, there are some of them that interest us deeply. Consider, for example, verse seven. Paul writes: "Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me." We wish that we knew more about these relatives of Paul who were Christians before he was converted. The phrase "who are of note among the apostles" could mean "well known to the apostles." But Sanday and Headlam think it means distinguished as apostles. If this is correct we have here an illustration of the use of the word *apostles* in a broad sense and not in the narrower sense of referring exclusively to Paul and the twelve apostles. While we cannot be certain, the name Junia would seem to indicate that this person was a woman. If this is correct, we have in this case a woman who is mentioned in the New Testament as an apostle. It is in this sense that Chrysostom understands the passage when he writes: "And indeed to be apostles at all is a great thing. But to be even amongst these of note, just consider what a great encomium this is! But they were of note owing to their works, to their achievements. Oh! how great is the devotion of this woman, that she should be even counted worthy of the appellation of apostle!"[14]

We find ourselves interested also in verse 13, in which Paul writes: "Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine." This Rufus is probably to be identified with the Rufus mentioned in Mark 15:21. Mark's Gospel was written to the Romans, and Rufus is a recognized leader in the Roman church. If this identification is correct, he is the son of Simon of Cyrene and his mother is the wife of the man who bore the cross of

Jesus. Paul evidently knows the mother of Rufus so well that he calls her his mother also. Could Paul have had this contact with the family of Simon of Cyrene? As we read this chapter we notice also with interest the way in which Tertius, the scribe who writes for Paul the letter to the Romans, takes time to identify himself and to send his greeting in the Lord to the church at Rome.

Paul and his frends lived in the first century. The personalities that gather around Paul rise to meet us from the pages of the New Testament as a unique and interesting fellowship. If we accept the faith of the companions of Paul, we must believe that those who stood with him in the Lord did not pass through death to annihilation. To use the thought of Paul, death was to them the time to set sail and to be with Christ.[15] These people believed with Paul that the Jesus whom they had acknowledged as Lord was able to deliver them from every evil work and to preserve them unto His heavenly Kingdom. If we accept the faith in which these first-century believers lived and died, we must believe that the Christians who gave their witness to Christ in the beginning of the Christian movement are alive in Christ today. We must believe that they are with Jesus in that resurrection world of God which confronts us in the risen Lord.

There is a sense in which those of us who are in the midst of our earthly pilgrimage can enter now into the fellowship of these first Christians. We can accept their faith. We can move out as they did in the great adventure of living with and for Christ in our own generation. We can be among those through whom Jesus Christ goes forth to accomplish His purpose in our world. If we acknowledge Him to be the Lord, we become a part of His Church. We take our place in that redemptive fellowship, that body of Christ, which is the ultimate goal of the whole process of creation and redemption. But if we accept the faith of Paul and of those who stood around him, we can hope for more than a spiritual fellowship with them as we serve Christ today. We can know that those who are united in Christ are bound together in an eternal relation. We can hope that some day we will stand with Paul and his friends in the presence of the Christ who is the Saviour of all who believe.

APPENDIX

These character studies of the personalities around Paul are based on a reconstruction of the life of Paul which is at some points disputed. It is assumed here that Luke is the author of the Book of Acts and of the Gospel which bears his name. The Pauline authorship of Ephesians is accepted. The letters usually known as the Pastoral Epistles—i. e., First and Second Timothy and Titus—are treated as Pauline. We have adopted also the hypothesis of two imprisonments at Rome. It is believed that Paul, after waiting two years for trial before Caesar, was released; that he went on another journey, and that he was arrested again and taken to Rome for a second imprisonment. First Timothy and Titus are accepted as written in the period between the two imprisonments. Second Timothy is thought to be the last of the letters of Paul. It is believed that this letter was written during the second imprisonment and just before the death of Paul. On all of these points, Christian scholarship today is divided. While the weight of modern scholarship is in some cases against the positions taken in this book, it should be remembered that the reconstruction of the life of Paul which is advanced here has the support of most of the older books in the field. It is the position which through the centuries has been accepted by Christian scholarship as a whole. It is supported today by the chronology of the life of Paul which is given in the Westminster *Dictionary of the Bible.* And it is accepted in the life of Paul entitled *Conqueror in Chains* by Donald G. Miller, in the Christian Faith and Life Series of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

In the main the character studies of the personalities around Paul are independent of the positions taken on the critical questions which we have raised. In most cases, they would not be affected at all by the adoption of different positions on the issues upon which scholars are divided. First and Second Timothy and Titus are, however, peculiarly rich in the human interest involved in their references to the men and women who stood around Paul. And in some cases the character delineation is sharpened by reference to the peculiar situation which called forth Paul's second letter to Timothy. This is true in the studies we have made of John Mark, Luke, Timothy, Titus, Tychicus, Demas, and Onesiphorus. Some understanding of the danger involved in coming to Paul at this time is essential for the full appreciation of the decisions these men had to make. We can deal with most of these characters without the use of the Pastoral Epistles, but if we ignore these letters the material upon which we have to base our study is to this extent impoverished.

It should be said here that many of the scholars who do not accept the Pastoral Epistles as fully Pauline do acknowledge that they contain genuine Pauline material. In particular they feel that the personal references to experiences in Paul's life and the comments concerning his friends and opponents are to be accepted genuinely as Pauline. It is almost exclusively this type of material which is used in these studies.

The study of the personalities around Paul was undertaken independently of any effort to think through again the critical questions which face us in the reconstruction of the life of Paul. But as the result of these studies some observations can be made. As we analyze the characters we appreciate the men and women of the Book of Acts and the personalities which meet us in the Pauline Epistles. The two sources supplement each other in a remarkable way. This is just what we would expect to find if we accept the traditional position that Acts was written by Luke, the friend and companion in travel of Paul. The unity of the Book of Acts and the letters of Paul in their description of the characters who stood around Paul can hardly be accidental.

The question of the Pauline authorship of the letter to the

Ephesians does not seriously affect our study, as Ephesians is devoid of all personal references with the exception of the commendation of Tychicus in Ephesians, chapter six, verses twenty-one and twenty-two. And as far as our study of Tychicus is concerned, the same reference in a slightly amplified form is found also in Colossians, chapter four, verses seven and eight. But here again this is exactly what we would expect to find if we accept Ephesians as a circular letter to the churches of Asia which was written at the same time as the letter to the Colossians. Tychicus, the bearer of the letter, is commended and all other personal references are left out of a circular letter.

We should notice also that the references which Paul makes both to those who support him and to those who oppose him in the Pastoral Epistles fit perfectly into the picture which has already been set in Acts and in the undisputed letters of Paul. The unity of these references is a strong argument for the genuineness of the Pastoral Epistles. Finally, we should notice that Second Timothy in particular has about it a genuineness in its human interest which could not easily be imitated. We have Paul asking Timothy to bring the cloak which he had left at Troas with Carpus. With this request, Paul expresses the hope that Timothy (and the cloak) will arrive before winter. We have Paul's memory of the persecutions at Lystra where he found Timothy. We have his concern for Trophimus left sick at Miletus. And underlying the whole letter there is Paul's expectancy of death in the near future and his concern lest Timothy falter in the day of persecution. If ever a letter carried within itself the argument for its own genuineness, it would seem that the second letter to Timothy would commend itself as genuinely Pauline.

The critical questions which meet us in the study of the life of Paul do not seriously affect our effort to see Paul in his relation to the men and women who stood around him. But an incidental result of the study is the strengthening of the conviction that traditional reconstruction of the life of Paul is the most satisfactory explanation of the facts which must be faced in the study of this part of the New Testament.

NOTES

1. Stephen

1. Acts 22:17-20. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the King James Version.
2. John 4:21.
3. Matthew 5:43-45a.
4. Acts 7:51-53.
5. Acts 7:56.
6. I Timothy 1:15.

2. Ananias

1. Acts 9:11.
2. Acts 9:13-14.
3. Acts 9:15.
4. Acts 22:16.
5. Acts 22:14-15.

3. Barnabas

1. Luke 16:10-11.
2. Colossians 4:10; Philemon 24; II Timothy 4:11.
3. I Corinthians 9:6; Galatians 2:1, 9, 13; Colossians 4:10.

4. Gamaliel

1. Acts 22:3.
2. From the article on Gamaliel in the Schaff-Herzog *Encylopedia of Religious Knowledge,* Vol. II, p. 853.
3. Acts 5:34.
4. Acts 5:29.
5. Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews,* Vol. XX, ch. V, sec. 1. (See also Vol. XVIII, ch. I, sec. 1.)
6. Acts 5:38-39.

7. Philippians 3:5.
8. Acts 23:6.
9. Acts 26:5.
10. Acts 9:4.

5. Elymas

1. I Corinthians 1:26.
2. Acts 13:6 (R.S.V.)
3. From *Conqueror in Chains* by Donald G. Miller, p. 68. Published by The Westminster Press, Philadelphia. Copyright 1951 by W. L. Jenkins. Used by permission.
4. Acts 13:10-11. (R.S.V.)
5. Acts 13:12.

6. John Mark

1. See Mark 14:51-52.
2. Acts 12:12.
3. I Peter 5:13.
4. Colossians 4:10.
5. Acts 13:13.
6. Acts 15:38.
7. Acts 15:39.
8. Colossians 4:11. (R.S.V.)
9. Philemon 24.
10. Edward Gordon Selwyn, *The First Epistle of St. Peter,* p. 60. Macmillan & Co., Ltd., London, 1946.

7. Silas

1. Acts 15:22.
2. Acts 15:32.
3. I Peter 5:12. (A.S.V.)
4. Acts 17:6.

8. Luke

1. Colossians 4:14.
2. Colossians 4:11. (R.S.V.)
3. II Timothy 4:10-11.
4. Acts 16.
5. Acts 20:5-6, 13-16.
6. Colossians 4:14.
7. Mark 5:26.
8. Luke 8:43.
9. Luke 1:1-2.

9. Eunice

1. Acts 14:19.
2. II Timothy 3:14-15.

10. Timothy

1. James Hilton, *Good-bye, Mr. Chips,* p. 124. Little, Brown and Co., 1934.
2. I Corinthians 4:15.
3. I Timothy 1:2; II Timothy 1:2; I Timothy 1:18; I Corinthians 4:17.
4. Philippians 2:22.
5. Acts 16:2.
6. I Thessalonians 3:1-6.
7. Acts 19:22.
8. Acts 20:4-5.
9. Philippians 2:19-23.
10. Philemon 1:1.
11. Hebrews 13:23.
12. I Corinthians 11:1. (A.S.V.)
13. I Corinthians 4:16. (A.S.V.)
14. I Corinthians 4:17. (A.S.V.)
15. I Corinthians 16:10.
16. Philippians 2:20-21. (A.S.V.)
17. I Thessalonians 3:1-8.
18. I Timothy 6:20. (A.S.V.)
19. II Timothy 1:14. (A.S.V. margin.)
20. II Timothy 2:2. (A.S.V.)

11. John

1. Galatians 2:8.
2. John 1:14.
3. Galatians 4:4. (R.S.V.)
4. Galatians 2:20.
5. I John 4:10.

12. Peter

1. II Peter 3:14-16.
2. Galatians 2:11-15.
3. James 4:17.
4. Galatians 2:14.
5. Karl Barth, *Theological Existence Today,* p. 52. Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1933.

13. James

1. Mark 6:3; Matthew 13:55.
2. Matthew 12:46-50.

3. John 7:5.
4. I Corinthians 15:7.
5. Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church,* Vol. I, *Apostolic Christianity,* p. 266. Copyright, 1910, by Charles Scribner's Sons. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952.
6. Acts 1:14.
7. Galatians 1:19.
8. Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews,* Book XX, ch. IX, sec. 1.
9. James 1:1.
10. James 2:1.
11. James 1:21. (A.S.V.)
12. James 5:7.
13. Matthew 7:21.
14. James 2:1.
15. Galatians 2:11-21.

14. Lydia

1. Matthew 28:19-20. (R.S.V.)
2. Anonymous, c. 1904.
3. See Shorter Catechism, A. 94.

15. Gallio

1. W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howson, *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul,* Vol. I, p. 417. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1892.
2. *Ibid.,* p. 418.
3. J. Rawson Lumby, *The Acts of the Apostles* (in the Cambridge Bible Series), p. 237. The University Press, Cambridge, 1882, 1897.
4. Acts 18:14-15.
5. I Corinthians 1:21.
6. Acts 17:16.
7. I Corinthians 1:23-24.

16. Phebe

1. I Corinthians 14:34-35.
2. Romans 16:3; I Corinthians 16:19; II Timothy 4:19; Acts 18:2, 18, 26.
3. Galatians 3:28.
4. I Timothy 5:2.

17. Priscilla and Aquila

1. II Timothy 4:19.
2. Acts 18:2.
3. Acts 20:33-35.
4. Romans 16:3.
5. I Corinthians 16:19. (R.S.V. Italics ours.)
6. Romans 16:5.

7. Acts 18:25.
8. Acts 19:1-7.
9. Acts 18:26.
10. Acts 18:28.
11. Romans 16:3-4. (R.S.V.)

18. Apollos

1. I Corinthians 16:8, 12.
2. I Corinthians 1:11-12.

19. Demetrius

1. See article on Ephesus in *The Westminster Dictionary of the Bible* for a picture of the image of Diana and a description of the magnificence of her temple.
2. I Timothy 3:16.
3. Mark 8:36-37.

20. Agabus

1. I Corinthians 12:8-10.
2. Acts 21:11.
3. Acts 21:4.
4. Acts 20:22-23.
5. Acts 21:13.
6. Acts 20:24.
7. Romans 15:25-26.
8. Acts 20:24.

21. Ananias

1. Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews,* Vol. XX, ch. V, sec. 2; ch. VI, sec. 2-3; *Wars of the Jews,* Vol. II, ch. XVII, sec. 6, 9.
2. Acts 22:30.
3. Acts 23:1.
4. Acts 23:3.
5. Acts 23:5.
6. John 18:22-23.
7. John 7:51.
8. Matthew 23:27.
9. Acts 13:10-11.
10. See, for example, Amos 7:17 or I Kings 21:23.

22. Felix

1. Tacitus, *The History,* Vol. V, ch. 9.
2. Acts 21:38.
3. Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews,* Vol. XX, ch. VII, sec. 1-2; Tacitus, *The History,* Vol. V, ch. IX.

4. Acts 9:15.
5. Psalm 107:1.
6. Acts 24:25.

23. Porcius Festus

1. Acts 25:16.
2. Acts 26:24.
3. Acts 26:25.
4. Robert Browning, "A Death in the Desert."

24. Herod Agrippa

1. Acts 26:28.
2. Acts 12:2. (R.S.V.)
3. Acts 12:23-24.
4. Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews,* Vol. XIX, ch. IX; Vol. XX, ch. V, sec. 2; *Wars of the Jews,* Vol. II, ch. XI, sec. 6.
5. Acts 9:15.

25. Titus

1. Titus 1:4.
2. II Corinthians 8:23.
3. II Corinthians 2:12-13.
4. II Corinthians 7:5-6.
5. Galatians 6:15.
6. I Corinthians 9:20.
7. Acts 15:1.
8. II Corinthians 12:18.
9. Titus 1:5.
10. II Timothy 4:10.

26. Tychicus

1. I Corinthians 16:12.
2. Acts 20:4-5.
3. I Corinthians 16:3-4; II Corinthians 8:18.
   See J. B. Lightfoot's *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Colossians,* pp. 233-234. Macmillan & Co., London, 1884.
4. Acts 21:29.
5. Colossians 4:9.
6. Ephesians 6:21-22. (R.S.V.)
7. Colossians 4:7. (R.S.V.)
8. Ephesians 6:22 and Colossians 4:8. (R.S.V.)
9. Lightfoot, *op. cit.* Italics ours.
10. Colossians 4:7.

27. Epaphroditus

1. Acts 16:12-15, 40.
2. Philippians 4:15-16.
3. II Corinthians 11:9.
4. Philippians 2:25.
5. J. B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians,* p. 124. Macmillan & Co., Ltd., London, 1900.
6. *Ibid.,* p. 125.
7. Philippians 2:26.
8. Luke 14:26.

28. Philemon

1. Colossians 2:1.
2. Philemon 19.
3. Colossians 4:17.
4. Philemon 10-16.
5. Colossians 4:1.
6. Ephesians 6:9.
7. Colossians 3:25.

29. Onesimus

1. Acts 28:31.
2. Romans 10:9-13. (R.S.V.)
3. Philemon 12. (R.S.V.)
4. *Alcoholics Anonymous,* p. 71. (Italics ours.) Works Publishing Company, New York City, 1944.

30. Archippus

1. Philemon 1-2.
2. Colossians 1:26-27.
3. Galatians 4:19.
4. Acts 20:26-27.
5. II Peter 3:18.
6. Colossians 1:29.
7. Colossians 1:24. (R.S.V.)

31. Epaphras

1. See Philemon 23.
2. Colossians 1:5. (R.S.V.)
3. Colossians 1:14.
4. Colossians 1:13. (R.S.V.)
5. Colossians 1:5-7; cf. John 14:2-3.
6. Colossians 1:5; cf. I Peter 1:4.
7. Acts 20:27.
8. Galatians 4:19.

32. Demas

1. Colossians 4:14.
2. Philemon 23-24.
3. II Timothy 4:9-11a.
4. See chapter on Luke.
5. Colossians 4:12; Philemon 23.
6. Acts 28:30-31.
7. Acts 21:13. (A.S.V.)
8. II Timothy 4:5-8. (A.S.V.)
9. II Timothy 2:11-13. (R.S.V.)

33. Hymenaeus and Alexander

1. Romans 2:1.
2. I Timothy 1:20. J. B. Phillips, *Letters to Young Churches,* p. 145. Copyright, 1947, by The Macmillan Company. Used by permission of the publishers.

34. Onesiphorus

1. II Timothy 1:15.
2. II Timothy 4:16.
3. Matthew 25:36.

35. Trophimus

1. Acts 14:8-18; 19:11-20.
2. Philippians 2:25-30.

36. Nero

1. This account of the life of Nero is based on articles in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* the *Library of Universal Knowledge,* and Schaff's *History of the Christian Church,* Volume I. These in the main are based on the writings of Tacitus, the Roman historian.
2. Matthew 10:28.

Epilogue

1. Acts 23:25-30.
2. Acts 27:43.
3. Acts 19:13-16.
4. II Timothy 4:14-15.
5. Acts 20:6-12.
6. Acts 19:29.
7. Acts 20:4.
8. Acts 27:2.
9. Colossians 4:10; Philemon 24.
10. Acts 20:4.
11. Romans 16:23.

12. I Corinthians 1:1; Acts 18:17.
13. I Corinthians 16:15.
14. W. Sanday and A. C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans,* p. 423. Charles Scribner's Sons.
15. Philippians 1:23.

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